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॥ नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ॥

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Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. LIII MARCH 1967 No. 11

PARAMĀRTHASĀRA

मोक्षस्य नैव किञ्चिद्धामास्ति न चापि गमनमन्यत्र । अज्ञानमयग्रन्थेर्भेदो यस्तं विदुर्मोक्षम् ॥ ७३ ॥

73. There is no other abode (body) at all for Mokṣa[1] nor is there going elsewhere (to attain it) ;[2] the cutting (destroying) of the knot of ignorance, is known (by the wise) as Mokṣa.[3]

[1] There is no other *body* to be attained for gaining liberation — that is the meaning.

[2] A Śruti text in support of this statement is quoted by the commentator. 'And whoever among the gods knew It also became that; likewise among the sages and men.' तद्यो यो देवानां प्रत्यबुध्यत स एव तदभवत् तथर्षीणां, तथा मनुष्याणाम् ।
(*Br. Up.*, I. iv. 10)

[3] The realization of Reality itself is Mokṣa in our concept and not attaining any other body or any other world. By this other concepts of Mokṣa stand refuted.

DOUBT : How?

REPLY : The theory of Chārvākas (*the materialists*) that death itself is liberation cannot be correct, for death cannot be a *puruṣārtha*, an end to be attained, as, according to them, death is the destruction of the self; secondly, that state being invisible is of uncertain nature.

The Jainas (Kṣapaṇaka) view that liberation means a perpetual going upwards is not proper. For it entails exertion to prevent one's incessant movement downwards and therefore cannot be the aim of life.

The dawning of the series of pure cognition which the Vijñānavādi Bauddhas consider as liberation is unsuitable, since the prior series of knowledge relating to objects (*viṣaya uparakta*), which formed the personality of the aspirant, fades out, resulting in the destruction of the earned and the inflow of the unearned *karma*; further, when there is absence of association with objects, the pure knowledge, being undifferentiated, cannot be a series.

The view of the Mādhyamika Bauddhas that attaining the void is liberation is inconclusive. For if this void is self-effulgent then it should be Real (*sat*), existent; if not self-effulgent there cannot be any aspirant to liberation and hence the void or nihil cannot be established.

The Naiyāyika view that release is the state of the Self when it renounces the nine qualities such as cognition etc., is to be disregarded. Because, it portends the attainment of a state of inertness like that of stone, whereas in *mokṣa* there is the eventuality of enjoying wishing, knowing, and doing in a way similar to that of Parameśvara.

The view of the Nirīśvara Sāṅkhyas that the discrimination between Prakṛti and Puruṣa is release is not acceptable, because in release Prakṛti is not seen and hence in that state discrimination between the two (Prakṛti and Puruṣa) is not possible; and when Prakṛti is seen then there is the eventuality of bondage.

Seśvara Sāṅkhyas consider liberation as the intimate union of the finite self with the Supreme self; this also is not approvable, for if one who was previously not the Lord newly acquires Lordliness then that Lordliness being incidental is not permanent; further the defects such as the inflow of the non-earned and the destruction of the earned *karma* will be found impossible to refute.

The abiding of the Self in its own state is considered by the Karma Mīmāmsakas as release. If the Self persists as in the prior state then no rites etc., need be performed now to attain it; the Self being already present. If, on the otherhand, it does not persist in the prior state that state is not its true one. Hence this concept of *Mokṣa* is also to be discarded.

When, again, the Pāśupatas say that the attainment of similarity with Parama Śiva is liberation, it is to be asked what this similarity means. If it is said that it constitutes omniscience and omnipotence, it cannot be. For these powers are impossible in one who is not the Self-of-all. If one is the self-of-all then it is improper to suggest similarity for the liberated, who have attained the state of Parama Śiva. If it is proposed that similarity consists in being free from impurities such as littleness (*aṇava*), delusion (*māyā*), and *karma* that too is not true. Because these three impurities are impossible to be got rid of by one who is not of the nature of knowledge, and is not free from bondage as also the idea of difference. Such a state being present there cannot remain any difference from the Lord. If it is otherwise then Parameśvara will have some other nature than the Supreme Lord, which is not a covetable position.

Again, Sāttvatas hold release to be the attainment of the same world as that of Hari, of nearness to Him, of attaining the same form as His, of union with Him, in His four manifestations such as Vāsudeva, etc. These states if previously did not exist have no reality now; if they already exist then the effort and trouble to attain them is unnecessary. Besides in such a view differentiation persists and hence also fear.

Therefore, liberation is but the destruction of ignorance through the immediate knowledge of the identity of Brahman with Ātman.

[Here the commentator cites three verses from the *Bhagavad Gītā* (V. 15-17) and a passage from Chāndogya Upaniṣad (VII. xxvi).

तस्मै मृदितकषायाय तमसः पारं दर्शयति भगवान्सनत्कुमारः [illegible]

'To him who had risen above blemishes Bhagavān Sanatkumāra showed the other shore of darkness (nescience)', in support of the above conclusion]

All other views that are in variance with this conclusion, and are cited here in respect of Self-knowledge, are declared to be invalid, because of their being associated with nescience, like the dream-world.

(*Continued on page* 463)

THE GRACE OF THE MIND

I

A VERY significant saying of Sri Ramakrishna is, 'You may have the grace of the Lord, and the *guru,* but if you have not the grace of your mind then the other two will be of little avail for your spiritual uplift'. It seems really a paradox. How can the mind overrule the grace of God? Is it then such a potent factor as to set at naught the grace of the preceptor as well as of the Lord? These are the questions that will confront one's mind on hearing this utterance. Where shall we find the answer for these questions? By thinking deeply in and on our own minds.

First of all, we have to know that the mind is a mechanism which can divide itself, as it were, into two separate entities; one as the player, the actor and the other as the observer, the witness. Of course, we do not refer here to the Self or the Ātman, which is the witness, the illuminator, the operator of the body-mind machine, the prime mover of all our thoughts, volition, and action. We shall confine at this stage to the mind alone.

This phase of the mind, that is its capacity to bifurcate into two channels, as it were, will not be clear to the ordinary people who are moved by impulses in most of their actions. Take for instance a man in a fit of anger. What will he not do? He may commit any crime. He is carried away by the impulse and cannot use that part of his mind, which the Indian psychologists call *buddhi* (intellect). Similarly men under the impelling force of other passions fail to utilize this faculty. Their mind is completely lost in the impulse to act, or in the act, during those moments.

But it is not a fact that the generality of mankind does not possess or develop this faculty. That man regrets some of his actions for whatever reason, demonstrates that this faculty is not absent in him. Also, commerce, science, literature, music, art, and architecture have developed because of it. Yet the very same persons who have reached the pinnacle of glory in these spheres may be swayed by passions, may commit crimes. How could such a thing be possible if they were not swept off their feet in the current of their passions, thus losing hold of their intellect?

Again, it is a psychologically proved fact that a part of the mind should always co-operate with the body for the performance of any action; there is no automation in it. Even when we allude to automation in man we imply that he does not do his deeds devoting his full mind to them, does not use his discriminative part of it.

All this will be obvious if we but begin to analyze every thought that we think, every word that we utter and every action that we perform. This self-analysis, if we may say so, is the laying of the foundation of man's character on a firm basis. All other codes of outward conduct, mores, traditions and so on are only aids to develop this intuitive self-analysis. These codes and mores cannot make you a new being unless you accept the disciplines involved in them whole-heartedly and not as drudgery. Perhaps, in the beginning even this drudgery should be accepted and may prove fruitful provided there is a real hankering after the spirit, after God. But if it remains as a burden, as a shackle which you think is impeding you every moment of your life then the outer disciplines will only weigh on your mind and create tension.

Well, what creates tension? Many of us might have seen the sport called the 'tug of war'. A rope is usually the medium by which the strength of the parties is tested. The two parties try to pull the other its own way. When the sides are balanced the pressure on the rope is such that it becomes taut. Likewise in the mind there are two tendencies, the good and the evil, each pulling its own way. When neither of these want to yield ground, tension is created. Let us take a concrete example. Suppose a man is impelled by his tendencies to wicked actions, at the same time his intellect functioning properly refuses to submit to the impulse. If the intellect is strong the man may wean away the mind, but if it is neither strong nor weak, is just able to counter the pull of his evil tendencies and no more, the mind then gets taut. Tension may also result when one is facing misery continually and for a long time. Then the resistance of the mind, however strong, wears off and a stage is reached when there arises an intense conflict, whether to go the easier way or fight and stay in the right path.

It is this period of tension that is critical in man's life. Either he succumbs to allurements and temptations or overpowers them and comes out victorious. History of religion is the history of these conquests of the lower self by the higher or, to be consistent with our subject, of lower desires of the mind by the higher values. That it is the mind which is responsible for what we are, is epigrammatically given in one of the Upaniṣads. 'The mind alone is the cause of man's bondage and liberation. That (mind) which is enraptured in worldly pleasures makes for bondage and that which has freed itself from such allurements helps towards liberation,'[1] says the *Brahmabindu Upaniṣad*.

II

After this preamble the subject, the grace of the mind, we believe, will be easier to grasp. We can now say that the willingness of the mind to take the yoke of God is what can be said to be its grace. Many of us have not noticed how wild horses behave when they are caught, to be tamed. But, it is said that this is a tough job which trained, strong and adventurous men alone can do. These horses are very turbulent, and would not like to lose their freedom. Some of them struggle to the last limit of their physical energy, before they give in. Even when they are caught, it is a task to tame them and ride or yoke them to the plough or the wagon. Man's mind is like the wild horse. Unrelenting should be the pressure that is made to bear on it. Not so much as to create tension but to watch and root out the thoughts that bring tension on. But this is most easily said than done. It is a lifetime's work to bring the mind into subservience and give it to God.

What then is the meaning of God's grace if it cannot detract us from our foibles, shortcomings and follies and attract us towards Him, if it cannot transform us? Sri Ramakrishna's simile of the mother engaged in her household chores and the child busy with the red toys is a very apt illustration to the point. As long as the child is happy with the toys the mother goes on with her household work, but a part of her mind remains always on the child. She hears it laugh and toss the toys, crawling or toddling about in great glee. So she allows it to play on but when the child has nothing more to do with the toys and cries for the mother, that moment she runs to it, discarding the work, whatever it may be, that she is engaged in. As long as we are busy and happy with our worldly life God allows us to be so. Otherwise like the children that are snatched away from their games we will be miserable. Do not the best dishes taste common and insipid when one has no hunger? Also, do not the ordinary dishes taste like nectar when one has toiled hard or had foregone food for many a day? That is the contrast. There should be hunger for God, thirst to taste His sweetness. Without this yearning even if God bestows his vision we would not welcome it. We may willy-nilly go on but a lingering back glance will always remain. But once this thirst develops then any yoke will be welcome and be cheerfully borne. When the mind can create such yearning for God then it can be said that its grace has dawned on that person.

---

[1] मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं वन्ध मोक्षयोः ।
वन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ।
—Brahmabindu Upanishad, 2.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say that the breeze of the Lord's grace is always blowing, only we have to unfurl the sails to catch it. Unfurling the sails is to make the mind receptive to thoughts about God. Ordinarily our mind is receptive to the impressions that the senses bring and though not averse, in some cases, to thoughts about God, the mind cannot be described as overflowingly avid towards them. Man, by his mistaken notion searches after everlasting bliss and peace in the external world but finds it nowhere. Like the astronauts that went round space and found God nowhere, he becomes disappointed in the end if he searches for joy outside.

III

All investigations either in the sphere of science or religion is to find out that one Principle of Bliss which runs through every being and non-being and manifests in a variety of ways. But the veils, both in the internal and the external worlds, are too thick, very opaque, to allow penetration for our ordinary minds.

These clouds that veil our being from getting in contact with God are our passions which incessantly create a turmoil in the mind and never allow the image of God to reflect there. For as we have already noticed the swift stream of passions carries away man along with it, without giving him respite or any chance to deliberate over the actions which he is rushed in, intimidated, as it were, to do. That is what Arjuna complains to Sri Krishna, 'When this is so, urged by what does man do evil deeds though unwilling, as if compelled by force'.[2] Arjuna's question is when it is well-known that one has to reap the bitter fruits of one's evil actions, why does man persist in doing them. Sri Krishna's reply is, 'It is desire, it is anger (passion), that is born of *rajas* which is a voracious consumer, and a great evil (that makes man engage in evil deeds). Know this to be your enemy here.'[3] Sri Krishna continues, 'Just as the fire is concealed by smoke, just as the mirror is covered by dust, just as the foetus is covered by the amnion even so this knowledge is hidden by passion'.[4] The three examples here, imply three different stages of growth; smoke is natural to fire likewise passions are inherent in the mind in the form of impressions, and therefore give rise to the innumerable bodies which we pass through; the dust that covers the mirror is an external element, similarly, the attractions of the senses which come from outside have the tendency to make the desires stronger; the membrane that covers the foetus limits all its movements, even so man's freedom is curtailed by his enhanced passions, and he is bound by them even as a prisoner is by fetters.

The *Bhagavata* in an exquisite verse depicts how man gets entangled in this world. 'The mind creates these bodies, qualities, and deeds for this Self. That mind again creates ignorance (Māyā) from whence results all this transmigration.'[5] We try to imagine things and by the sway of our imagination we bring them into being. So, as Swami Vivekananda says, 'Let visions cease. Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams, which are Eternal Love and Service free'.

Perhaps, we are apt to brush aside the above as a poetic sentiment. But before we pass on to the scientific explanation about it let us recall that one of the epithets of God, in the Hindu scriptures is Kavi,[6] the intelligent one, one of insight, the poet. All poetry is not mere sentiment for some of the best thoughts in philosophy have been expressed in the form of poems. The Vedas, and some of the Upaniṣads are examples in point. The above statement of Swami Vivekananda is not merely poetry but is an expression born of profound spiritual insight.

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[2] अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥
— *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 36.

[3] काम एष क्रोध एष रजो गुण समुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥

[4] धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्वेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥
— *Ibid.*, III. 37-38.

[5] मनः सृजति वै देहान् गुणान् कर्माणि चात्मनः ।
तन्मनः सृजते माया ततो जीवस्य संसृतिः ॥
— *Bhagavata*, 12. 5. 6.

IV

How imagination and hence the mind plays a great part can be easily explained. Let us take up the scientific and technological achievements of the present age. There was a time when even great thinkers and literateurs satirically wrote about man's attempt to fly in the air. But today it is an accomplished fact. All this has been made possible by imaginative thinking of the creative genius. In the present age no one can criticize as impracticable the wildest imagination of the scientist, of their being able to travel to the Moon or the Mars. The critic or the sceptic will then be considered as living in an antediluvian age, not aware of the advance science has made. As it is possible to lift ourselves by an imaginative process it is also possible to involve ourselves into difficulties by the same process. That is why Swamiji warned us to 'dream of truer dreams'. Thus we see that the mind has infinite power.

We can arrive at the same conclusion even from the physical point of view. Take up the science of biology. The biologists are of the opinion that germs of most of the diseases are present in our system but they bide their time, and become active only when the body gets weakened. We should not therefore allow our body to become weak. Swami Vivekananda says, 'There are hundreds of thousands of microbes surrounding us, but they cannot harm us unless we become weak, until the body is ready and predisposed to receive them. There may be a million microbes of misery, floating about us. Never mind! They dare not approach us, they have no power to get a hold on us, until the mind is weakened. This is the great fact; strength is life, weakness is death. Strength is felicity, life eternal, immortal; weakness is constant strain and misery: weakness is death'.

Thus from every point of view, we see, that the mind has a great part in the moulding of our lives. We should, therefore, be careful, to think thoughts, to visualize things, as would benefit us spiritually. And the grace of the mind, in a sense, is its capacity to think spiritual thoughts in a continuous and sustained manner.

Now, the English word grace can be translated into Sanskrit as *prasāda*. And this word *prasāda* in another sense means tranquillity also. If we equate these two words, viz., grace and tranquillity, with reference to the mind, we do not think we will be committing any error. On the other hand the grace of the mind is its very ceasing from going into modifications, attaining tranquillity, which, according to Patanjali, may be termed as Yoga.[7] It is the end towards which all our efforts, knowingly or unknowingly, are directed. Even the feverish activity and interminable desire for pleasure, though misdirected efforts, are to attain this tranquillity. But the tranquillity born of attaining worldly goods or pleasures is short-lived.

How can eternal tranquillity be attained? Sri Krishna says, 'One who is free from attachment and aversion and moves about amidst the sense objects with the senses and the mind governed by a controlled self attains serenity'.[8] Only then when one has acquired tranquillity of the mind, 'all miseries are destroyed; and the wisdom of a man of serenity soon becomes steady'.[9]

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[6] कविं पुराणमनुशासितारमणोरणीयान्समनुस्मरेद्यः ।

— *Bhagavad Gita*, VIII. 9.

कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयम्भूः ।

— *Isa Up.*, 8.

[7] योगश्चित्तवृत्ति निरोधः । — *Yoga Sutras*, I. 2.

[8] रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥

— *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 64.

V

The main purport, which runs through all our scriptures, is that we should be able to cleanse our minds of all dross, of all other thoughts which make us hanker after things here, and point the mind towards God. The more we are able to hold on to the thoughts about God, the more, we should say, is the grace of the mind bestowed on us. For there are instances when everything has been favourable, yet due to the lack of an inner urge we fail to do our spiritual practices, do not feel any inclination to do them. The reason is that the mind ordinarily flows out towards external objects and that is why one can concentrate one's mind on things external; but it is very difficult to concentrate on the mind itself or on our inner being. Because there the instrument and the object are one. It is only for this reason that we have images and symbols. The outgoing mind is given an outward object which reminds us about God. Thus helped to think of the abstract through the concrete, the mind which has lost taste for worldly pleasure, will take up this idea. Only when the mind has taken up this idea seriously to the exclusion of all other thoughts, can it be said that the grace of the mind has dawned on that person. Swami Vivekananda informs us that, 'This is the way to success, and this is the way great spiritual giants are produced'.

To sum up: the grace of the mind means its willingness to think of God, its eagerness to contemplate on Him, which in turn arises only when its hankering after pleasures has begun to abate, when it feels restless for God, when nothing disturbs its equanimity. It is a long process but one should not get disheartened. For nothing has been achieved by the weak; to the brave and the persisting alone have gone all the laurels in this world. And the laurels that will crown us in the field of spirituality are the only ones that give us peace that 'passeth understanding'.

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[9] प्रसादे सर्वदु:खानां हानिरस्योपजायते।
प्रसन्नो चेतसो ह्याशु: बुद्धि:पर्यवतिष्ठते ।
—*Ibid.*, II. 65.

PARAMĀRTHASĀRA

(*Continued from page* 458)

Doubt: What is this 'destruction of nescience' which is called release? (What is its nature?)

Reply: This destruction of nescience is not real, for in that case like the self it will be an another real. Neither is it unreal; in that event knowledge would be fruitless. It is not both; for real and unreal being of mutually contradictory natures cannot indisputably be said to abide in a place. It cannot be the inapprehensible (*sadasadvilakṣaṇa*), because nescience is of that nature, and the thing that is to be destroyed and the state of destruction cannot be of the same nature.

Doubt: Nor can it be beyond these four forms. What if it is said that it is of the nature of the void ?

Reply: No. For the opponents of reality unreal alone is the void and hence that word cannot be used by the opponents of indeterminable nescience. Therefore the destruction of nescience is of a fifth nature which is different from the above four forms.

Again, the removal of the illusory object does not consist in anything else than cognizing the substratum, on which the superimposition is made, in its true perspective, as that alone will remain when the other (the illusory) is negated. Therefore, Brahman reflected in the knowledge is the remover of nescience which is Its own effect and is superimposed on Itself. The removal of nescience is the very nature of Brahman.

Doubt : Well, as Prakṛti and Puruṣa are of quite different natures and as Prakṛti with its products exists separately from Puruṣa the theory of non-duality fails.

To this the following verse gives answer :

वुद्ध्वैवमसत्यमिदं विष्णोर्मायात्मकं जगद्रूपम् । विगतद्वन्द्वोपाधिकभोगासङ्गो भवेच्छान्तः ॥ ७४ ॥

74. Having known,[1] in this way, that this illusory world is the unreal form of Viṣṇu,[2] and being completely free from attachment to enjoyments,[3] such as the body, one becomes peaceful.

[1] *Having known,* being firmly convinced, that the world constituting the body and things pertaining to it, as being superimposed on the Ātman, through the process of agreement and difference, absence and exclusion ;

[2] *In this way,* as narrated in śloka 9 of the present treatise ;

[3] Having come to know that the world has no existence apart from the Self, and thence giving up all enjoyments connected with the body and the senses as also being devoted to the Self alone one becomes peaceful.

NOTE : A person thus liberated from the association with nescience though stays in the body, for some more time, is not subject to misfortune or evil — this is being stated next.

वुद्ध्वा विभक्तां प्रकृतिं पुरुषः संसारमध्यगोभवति । निर्मुक्तः सर्वकर्मभिरम्बुजपत्रं
यथा सलिलैः ॥ ७५ ॥

75. Having known Prakṛti[1] as distinct (from the Self)[2], the Puruṣa[3] though present in the transmigratory existence becomes free from all *karma*, just as the lotus-leaf in water.[4]

[1] Prakṛti as represented by the body and the like.

[2] Having known the body to be distinct from the Self and having rejected it as non-self, [3] the Puruṣa who has attained realization [4] remains uncontaminated by *karma* as lotus-leaf remains unaffected in water. In support of this is cited Pārāśara's aphorism : (Br. Sū. IV. i.13).

तदधिगमं उत्तरपूर्वाघयोरश्लेषविनाशौ तद्व्यपदेशात् ।

'On the attainment of that (Brahman) there is non-clinging of the later and destruction of the earlier sins, since this has been declared (by the scriptures) '.

NOTE : Having related the nature of Jīvanmukti the text now goes on to describe the behaviour of a Jīvanmukta.

अश्नन् यद्वा तद्वा संवीतो येनकेनचिच्छान्तः । यत्रक्वचन च शायी विमुच्यते सर्वभूतात्मा ॥ ७६ ॥

76. The Self-of-all beings[1] is calm, eats whatever he gets,[2] covers himself with anything, rests anywhere,[3] and is liberated.[4]

[1] He who has realized himself as such. [2] Either good or bad. [3] Sleeps on the bare ground, in the palaces, or by the road side. [4] Enjoys the bliss of liberation.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HIS MESSAGE

SARDAR UJJAL SINGH

HISTORY has taught us that in this world, great leaders, sages and saints who moulded thought and directed action, emerged from time to time in response, as it were, to the demands of the times. In India, we have had a succession of such great men. The movements that they started, infused in us a sense of moral and physical courage and a sense of unity and brotherhood whenever our society showed signs of deterioration. Swami Vivekananda belongs to that galaxy of great men of India who came down to resuscitate and revitalize man's faith in the Supreme. It is in the fitness of things that we should remind ourselves of the life and work of Swamiji on the occasion of his birthday celebration.

It is needless for me here to deal at great length with the life of Swamiji. Swamiji's name along with that of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is a byword in every Indian home. Thanks to the work of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission which have kept aloft the high ideals of the great religious savants, who infused new life in the minds of the masses, the charitable works, the missionary organisation and the philosophic publications, along with the educational works, the Maths, ashrams, societies, homes of service, orphanages and schools, all hum with activity, and continue to be illustrious monuments reminding us of the great work of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda.

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda appeared at a time when the society needed men of courage and wisdom, men of decisive spiritual authority and men of inspiration and masterful activity, who commanded respect from every section of the population. Swami Vivekananda wants us to see Shiva in the poor, in the weak and in the diseased. His strong emphasis is on love of fellowmen and service to fellowmen. He considered that the great national sin was the neglect of the masses and that was one of the causes of the nation's downfall. That God did not dwell in temples alone but that He vibrated in every fibre of the human being was clearly brought out when the Swamiji said, 'You may invent an image through which to worship God; but a better image already exists — the living man'. 'You may build a temple in which to worship God, and that may be good, but a better one, a much higher one, already exists — the human body.'

Courage was the breath of the Swamiji. He travelled extensively throughout the country to study and to have intimate knowledge of the conditions of the people. He exhorted them to be fearless and to shake off weakness and lethargy and to be strong and to work hard with determination to build up the future of India. Thus we see his mission was both national and international. He made no distinction of race, nation, creed, colour or sex, and the whole world was his home. Service to man was to him worship of God. In a country like India, where the people follow many faiths and practise many religions, it is highly necessary to cultivate and foster a general feeling of tolerance for all religious beliefs and faiths. Great saints have pointed out that there is an essential unity of all religions and that the fundamental concepts are alike and at times identical. The differences on the surface should not drive the adherents of different faiths to quarrel among themselves.

I may be permitted here to refer to the catholicity of Guru Gobind Singh's outlook as demonstrated by the fact that soon after he was installed as Guru, he learnt not only Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic and other languages, he also studied all religions — Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. As in the familiar Bhakti school of thought, he said that there was no difference between God and His devotees. He emphasized on the basic unity of mankind and proclaimed that there was no difference among the various places of worship resorted to by men of different faiths. Similarly Swami Vivekananda explained eloquently the real role of religion in these beautiful words: 'I accept all the religions that were in the past, and worship them all. I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian church and kneel before the Crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and his Law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the heart of everyone. Not only shall I do these things, but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future'.

Men of religion have spoken in similar strain in every clime and in every period of history. Madras has reason to be proud of its association with Swami Vivekananda. It was here that Swamiji propagated the message of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and found its acceptance. A brilliant group of enthusiastic young men became his ardent followers. It was in Madras that the Swamiji conceived the idea of going to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, and his disciples set about collecting the needed funds for helping him undertake his trip abroad.

To Swami Vivekananda, as Romain Rolland puts it, 'religion was the fellow-citizen of every thinking man and its only enemy was intolerance'. The Swamiji exhorted the people to give up all narrow limited fighting ideas of religion. According to him, the religious ideals of the future must embrace all that exists in the world and is good and great and at the same time have infinite scope for future development. He regarded religion as synonymous with universalism of the Spirit. He believed in a living religion and he said: 'It is said sometimes that religions are dying out, that spiritual ideas are dying out of the world. To me it seems that they have just begun to grow. So long as religion was in the hands of a chosen few or of a body of priests, it was in temples, churches, books, dogmas, ceremonials, forms and rituals. But when we come to the real, spiritual universal concept, then and then alone religion will become real and living. It will come into our very nature, live in our every moment, penetrate every pore of our society and be infinitely more a power for good than it has ever been before'. He clearly perceived religion to be a great and true instrument for approaching God.

I am glad that in Madras, Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission are playing their part in the social, spiritual, educational and humanitarian life of the people. They have kept before them the great ideal of an eternal religion as embodied in the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. I am particularly very happy about their activities in regard to promotion of health and expansion of education. I congratulate the Mission and the Math on the successful way in which they are running their several educational institutions and thus remind every boy and girl of the great heritage which they have imbibed coming down for ages.

In a small talk like this, it is difficult even to touch on the different aspects of the lives of these great men. The New India of tomorrow lies in the hands of the younger generation of today. Young men and young women who are studying in colleges are going to be our future citizens who will have to shoulder the responsibility for building up the great nation. It will redound to our credit if we remember the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and build up our nation on the solid foundation of unity, brotherhood and mutual understanding. May we all prove worthy of Swami Vivekananda and may we all do everything in furtherance of the great ideals which he set for us.

TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[A translation by SRI P. SESHADRI (for the first time) from the Bengali book *Sri Ramakrishna Punthi* written by Akshaya Kumar Sen.]

AKSHAYA KUMAR SEN

IN the Vedanta, the Atman is said to be unattached and to have no connection with pleasure and pain, virtue and vice and the like. But the person who identifies himself with the body, who has the consciousness of the body, necessarily suffers in various ways. This is explained by the simile of smoke. Smoke, enveloping a body, affects and contaminates it; but it cannot affect and contaminate the vast infinite sky on any account. In the same way, the person who thinks that he is the body meets with grief while the person who is freed of egoism is always blissful and serene. He who says constantly, 'I am free, I am free,' will certainly be free at one time. And he who says, 'I am a sinner, I am a sinner,' and is always obsessed with that idea will ever be bound by the chains of relative existence. The very hearing of the words, 'I am a sinner,' seemed like a thunderbolt to Sri Ramakrishna. Let me narrate an instance. Once Sri Ramakrishna was in his room at Dakshineswar with his beloved Narendra conversing very happily with him. At that time some Brahmo Samajists came there from Calcutta. The holy atmosphere of the place and the sight of Sri Ramakrishna gave them peace and bliss. The day passed away without their being conscious of the passage of time. With no mind to return home, they told Sri Ramakrishna that they would spend the night there. He was gracious to all and gladly granted their request. After the sunset, the Brahmo devotees began to sing. I do not remember the song but its purport was that we are all sinners and that God, the Father, should save us. The song, sung loudly in chorus, was silently heard by Sri Ramakrishna for a long time. But the singing did not stop and the same song was repeated several times. Then Sri Ramakrishna went to them and said aloud sharply, 'Why do you constantly repeat the word sinner? Who is a sinner? Why do you repeat the word needlessly? Leave this place and go elsewhere. You should have firm and unshakable faith in the efficacy of God's name which is even more powerful than Himself. The person who utters His name even just once in his whole life is freed from any sin or bondage.'

If God was spoken of as merciful, Sri Ramakrishna would become annoyed. Here is an instance. Once some Sikh soldiers said to Sri Ramakrishna in the temple of the Divine Mother at Dakshineswar: 'Who is there so merciful as God? The earth is made rich by Him with various kinds of corns, fruits, flowers, mines and other things. God has given us the five elements — ether, air, fire, water and earth — merely for our use.' Sri Ramakrishna replied, 'Why do you speak of God as merciful because He gives His children sustenance for their maintenance according to their needs? What mercy is there in that as He is only doing His duty as a father? Will anyone else maintain His family? We, *jīvas*, are all His children and it is His responsibility to maintain us. We are God's and God is ours. We are all closely related to God and there is not even an atom of alienness between God and us.' Sri Ramakrishna taught this idea of close relationship with God. A father will never take into account the defaults of his children. Then, why should we talk of sins? Who has sin? The father's duty is to maintain his children. What mercy is there in fulfilling that duty?

Sri Ramakrishna used to say often, 'I

accept as true the idea of Prārabdha (the result of past actions). Even though God may always be keeping us company, we cannot escape from the effects of *karma*. Even the Bhaktas cannot avoid the effects of *karma*. A shining example of this is the story of the hero Kālu. He was the beloved, blessed son of the Divine Mother. Yet, he had to suffer imprisonment. As a result of his past actions, he had to endure the pressure of a stone on his chest. The place of his execution was in Ceylon. The effects of actions are unavoidable. The four-armed Krishna, holding the conch, the discus, club and lotus, revealed Himself in His Godly form to His mother, Devaki, and yet she had to remain in prison as a result of her past actions.' Sri Ramakrishna also gave an excellent illustration, of a blind man. Although he is freed from his sins by bathing in the holy and purifying Ganges, he remains blind still.

Even though a devotee may get many pleasures and pains, he will never lose his devotion. In his heart there is the glow of knowledge shining with faith in God. He would never lose them and he would stand firm in prosperity and adversity. The Pandavas remained awakened in Knowledge whether on the throne or in exile. The more a *jīva* has finished with his worldly, sensual attachment, the greater is his love for God. The nearer Radha approached Sri Krishna, the more she smelt the fragrance of Sri Krishna's person. The nearer we approach God's Divine Presence, the more we get Godlike glory. How beautiful and magnificent is the increase of Bhava and Bhakti! Just as there is the play of both ebb and flow in the river water near the sea, so also the Bhakta laughs, weeps and dances under the sway of the ebb and flow of his feelings. Sometimes, he dives into the depths and sometimes he swims on the surface of the waters. Sometimes, he tastes the pleasure of sporting with the ocean.

The Jñāni has not the ebb and flow of the devotee and remains always in one and the same state. In the Knowledge of Brahman, there is the playing of only a continuous monotone while the worshippers of God with form play various musical tones. Listen to the nature of the monotone. The Jñāni says, 'The whole of creation is a dreamlike delusion. Brahman, Sat, Chit and Ānanda, always remains of the same nature, in His own Nature.' The quintessence of the Vedanta is very hard to comprehend. The Rajarshis, the Maharshis, Yogis and Tapasvis did various difficult *sādhanas* for a long time and pursued deep thinking solitarily before they were able to grasp it. Sri Ramakrishna explained the fact by a homely illustration in his sweet homely style. 'There was a rustic peasant in a village. He worked in the field and was every inch a farmer. At the same time, he was a true Brahmajñāni at heart and loved all. He was childless for long. But, he got a son later on in his old age. The boy was named Hāru and he was a pet of both the parents. One day, while the peasant was working in the field, somebody informed him that his boy was afflicted with fatal cholera and that his recovery was doubtful. Hearing the news, the farmer returned to his house in haste. There was no lack of medical treatment. The patient was attended to with great care. But all was in vain and the boy died. The members of the family were overpowered with grief and wept bitterly in anguish. But not a tear rolled down from the eyes of the farmer. On the other hand, he was consoling the bereaved persons. Next day, he went to attend to his work in the field. After finishing his work there, he returned to his house and found all members of the family weeping. But he was calm and unperturbed, no sadness being in him. His wife then told him, "How cruel you are! Our beloved child, Hāru, has just passed away and you did not shed a tear on that account." Hearing her complaint, he, who was a great Jñāni at heart and a peasant in name and profession only, replied: "Hear why I did not weep. Last night I had a dream. I dreamt that I had become the King of a state, that I was in great happiness and that I was blessed with eight sons. At that time, I woke up from my sleep. Now, I do not know what is proper for me to do, whether I should weep for Hāru or lament for the loss of the eight sons." The farmer had Advaitajñāna in full measure. He knew that the Paramatman alone is eternally true and that all else that we see is dreamlike and that waking is but a dream. He knew that all was unreal. We speak of the unreal as real on account of delusion.'

Speaking thus, Sri Ramakrishna naturally came to Māyāvāda, the theory of Māyā. He said, 'I accept and take up everything. I do not reject anything. The Turiya state, the fourth, where the *jīvātman* is absorbed in Brahman, is to be accepted, as also the three other states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. Brahman is real and so is His Māyā that consists of *jīvas* and *jagat*. I take as real the *jīvas* and the *jagat*. If the latter two are taken away, Brahman will lose in weight. Brahman can be compared to a bel fruit that has got the kernel, seeds, glue and the skin. If we keep the kernel, leaving the others, the exact weight of the bel will not be known. By the power of Māyā are produced the *jīvas* and the *jagat*.' The '*nitya*' and the '*lila*'* are both the manifestations of the same. Brahman and the power of Brahman are one and the same.

A gem and its lustre may be compared with Brahman and the Śakti (Power) of Brahman. If you think of the gem you think of its lustre also. In fact, the lustre reveals the gem. The lustre also cannot remain separately from the gem. Both cannot exist separately. The gem and its lustre go together. Brahman will lose weight if creation is taken away. Sacchidānanda, the one without a second, is known by various names according to the difference in Śakti. Sri Ramakrishna spoke in detail about Śakti. He said: 'When creation, preservation and destruction go on, there is the manifestation of Śakti.' When a person speaks or does anything, it is called Karma-Śakti. In the world of the moving and unmoving, the varied sparks of Śakti are seen; then Śakti is named the Ādya Śakti (Primal Power) whose nature is '*lila*'. Śakti is verily Brahman, the Sacchidānanda, and no other. A simile will clarify this. Think of Purna Brahman as a vast expanse of water. If there arise terrible waves and bubbles, they are but the same water. There is only a difference in manifestation. Some are called waves and some, bubbles, according to the difference in size. Difference in form is due to the difference in the manifestation of Śakti. Though there are differences in names and forms, they are all only water. They are therefore one in substance. As Swarat, Virat, Nitya, God the Formless and God with form in '*lila*', that one and the same Brahman, alone exists. It is very difficult to understand this. In the Cidākāśa, how many '*lilas*' arise from the Nitya, do work and merge again! Sri Ramakrishna's simile was as follows. 'It is like the ocean of Cit. If a heavy substance falls into it, immediately ripples arise and expand. So long as the ripples remain as such on the water, they can be compared with the "*lilas*" emanating from the Nitya. The ripples after some time merge in the water. So also, the "*lilas*" go back into the Nitya. The Jñānis reject the "*lilas*" as being but Māyā. The devotees take in both and do not make such fine distinctions. The mark of a true devotee is that his mind will not be unsettled by discussion and reflection according to Vedanta. By discrimination and contemplation, the "*lilas*" etc., may be reduced to Māyā, dream-like, unreal. Even though he may hear this many a time, the devotee will return to his original Bhakti. If his love and devotion seem to diminish by *jñāna-vichāra*, they will in time come to him with redoubled force.'

Then Sri Ramakrishna spoke about the theory of Avatara in nectarlike words that delighted the heart. 'That the Lord of all can be in a limited human body seems as impossible to ordinary *jīvas* as the big Airāvata, Indra's elephant, can be in a small pouch. They wonder how a very tiny receptacle, a human body, can be inhabited by the Supreme Being, God. In a human being, God's Power can abide just as all the potentialities of a big tree are latent in a tiny seed. The Lord of all, the Supreme Being, God is indeed Infinite, Unbounded, One without a second. But if He wills, He can incarnate in this world as an Avatāra. He has Power to come and He actually comes. This is an undoubted fact. He comes as a human being. The Avatāra comes with the essential powers of God, omnipotence, omniscience etc. Similes cannot explain the truth. He alone can be compared with Him. This is a matter of realization, direct perception. But an illustration may give a glimpse of the truth. Take a milk-yielding cow. The cow is touched by your touching any part of it, the tail, the hoof, the horn etc. This is very true and know for certain that the touching of a part is equivalent to touching the cow. This holds good of the Infinite also assuming a limited body as an Avatāra. The Supreme Being, out of compassion, takes a human body and thus Incarnates. By touching an Avatāra of God, you touch the Infinite God. The essential substance in a cow, sweet milk, is found in the udder and nowhere else. Likewise, the essence of God, love and devotion, cannot be met with elsewhere in full except in the Avatāras. So, the Eternal, Purna Brahman, the Omnipresent, the Beneficent, the Saviour of the fallen, comes to the earth, assuming a human body to teach the *jīvas*, devoid of Bhakti and Jñāna. Fire is latent everywhere. But it is present in wood more than in anything else. Similarly, God is present in all Avatāras more than in all creation. Hence, if a person wants to know about God, he should seek with enthusiasm the Avatāras assuming human bodies, since the powers in those bodies are greater than anywhere else. God manifests in them fully, without any least diminution.' So saying, Sri Ramakrishna spoke of the characteristics of Avatāras. He said, 'In an Avatāra, we see the full manifestation of supreme devotion and love. These two flow incessantly. An Avatāra is intoxicated by love and rapt with Bhāva at all times. If anyone says that the Omnipotent God, the Omnipresent, the Supreme, is unable to assume a human body, that is limiting the power of the All-Powerful Almighty. Therefore, it is for the great good of persons to believe the words of holy people like sādhus and Mahātmas. People should listen with faith and reverence the Puranas and other devotional scriptures. With a guileless heart they should do Shravaṇa and Kīrtana. Hypocrisy is very low, despicable and leads to grief. The heart and the lips do not agree in their case. They are puffed up with the vanity of riches, honours, learning etc., like wet corks. They have doubts and fears at every step, and their minds are impure. They are very calculating and worldly by nature. Such people cannot but be insincere. Without guilelessness, no real faith can dawn — that faith which is called Bhakti. The characteristic of sincerity is childlike faith, trust and simplicity. God, the ocean of compassion, is very gracious to those endowed with such childlike guilelessness. God can be directly seen, realized. Whether you believe in Avatāras or not, if you seek God with deep love, your desire will be surely fulfilled. The same God is both with and without form. You can follow any path you like according to your taste. The end will be the same and the result too will be the same. You can take Sandesh from any part you like and it will taste sweet. God with form and God without form are one and the same. To realize God love is the only means.

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* *Lila* — Divine sport.

'The Lord of all has got all Bhāvas, aspects. There is no limit to the states and conditions of God. He remains serene and the same in all states. Dive deep in the ocean of God. Rare gems and precious stones are lying in the depths and you can get them only by diving deep. Swimming on the surface is in vain and will yield no valuable results.

'To realise God, *sādhana* is prescribed and includes *puja, japa, dhyāna* (meditation) and singing of His name and glories. In the realms of Karma, no result will accrue without doing Karma. Do work to realize God. By repeating "Siddhi, Siddhi," (hemp, hemp) in a loud voice, you cannot get intoxicated. You must get the leaves of hemp, pound them, prepare them as a drink and drink that. Then only you will get intoxicated. To get intoxication by love of God, *sādhana* is prescribed. The place of *sādhana* should be in a very solitary spot so that others may not know what the *sādhaka* is doing. The tender plant should be fenced so that cows, goats and other animals might not destroy them. When the plant has grown into a big, mighty tree, mad elephants may be tied to it and they will remain fettered, doing no harm to the tree. Such is the case with all *sādhakas*. In the beginning, the *sādhaka* should do *sādhana* in a solitary place, away from the haunts of men, until he gets love for God and the heart becomes strong with faith and pure devotion. Afterwards, even if he enters *samsāra*, there will be no harm. The milk of the mind should be turned into curd carefully without disturbing it in the process and by churning the curd, the butter of Jñāna and Bhakti should be obtained. The butter will then float on the surface of the water of *samsāra*, even if it be put there, not mixing with the water. But if the milk of the mind, in its milk-state, is put in the water of *samsāra*, it will mix with the water, losing its own form, quality and colour.'

A message of hope is given to persons who are weak to do *sādhana* and have sunk into feebleness under the heavy weight of *samsāra* by Sri Ramakrishna, the compassionate one. He asked them to give Hari their power of attorney. They should be like the kitten which merely cries, 'Mew, mew,' and remains in the place where its mother has placed it. It never exerts to go elsewhere, even though it may die there. If they give over all their burdens to the Divine Mother and have abiding faith in Her, their hearts' desires will surely be fulfilled in time.

'There are three kinds of Siddhas — the Nitya-Siddhas, the Karma-Siddhas and the Kripa-Siddhas. The Nitya-Siddhas are Ever-free and they transcend all the injunctions of the Vedas. They are naturally full of love and devotion and are God's eternal devotees. They are born of godly nature. They are like natural images of Śiva, sprouting from the earth. They have no attachment to lust and wealth. They are born with the nature of the honey-bees. They constanly go about the lotus-feet of God and only drink the honey of bliss in God.

'The Karma-Siddhas are those fortunate ones, who attain Siddhi — perfection — by *sādhanas*. They work hard and exert a great deal, just as crossing the river in the rainy season though turning round again and again, because of the whirlpools.

'The Kripa-Siddhas become blessed by the strength of Grace. They are like those who, without any exertion, eat ripe fruits, sitting at home. They have no need of doing any *sādhana*, since God has been gracious to them. There is no need of a fan when the cool Malaya breeze is blowing.

'Discussing the Śāstras without Viveka and Vairāgya is only self-deception by Avidyā. Even if a person has the ability to expound the Śāstras, without plunging in God, he cannot grasp their real sense. The Śāstras speak only of ways to attain God. They are like a letter, asking a person to send articles like Sandesh, cloth etc. After reading the letter, there is no need of keeping it. The purpose is to send those articles. It is enough to remember the articles to be sent. The letter may be thrown away after knowing its contents. The person concerned goes in search of the articles to be sent. God's grace will certainly come to the person who sincerely yearns for Him. By that Grace he will surely see Him. After seeing Him, he talks with Him and carries on a hearty conversation with Him. This is not vain imagination of the mind, but an actual fact, a direct perception, just as you are talking with me, sitting in the same place.' After saying so much, Sri Ramakrishna added with sorrow, 'To whom shall I say this ? Who believes ? '

(*To be continued*)

HE WHO HOLDS IN HAND THE WHEEL OF THE CHARIOT (Rathangapani)

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[This is a translation by SRI T. V. BALASUBRAMANIAM of the article ("Rathangapani") in Tamil by Sri C. Rajagopalachari, which appeared in the *Kalki* dated 11-12-1966.]

To the devotees God is a slave. In their work He joins with them and Himself labours. All obstacles get removed. 'In whatever good you persevere make me also your associate and then act,' says Krishna.

> 'Let me be in your mind always',
>
> *matcittaḥ satatam bhava,*
>
> 'When you have me in your mind, you will surmount on account of my blessing, all difficulties.'
>
> *matcittaḥ sarvadurgāṇi matprasādāt tariṣyati*

says He in the *Gītā*.

'In whatever deed — which is not against *dharma*, you are engaged, keep me ever in your mind; with me in your thoughts, make all thy efforts; perform all your work; direct your thoughts to me and have faith in me. If your efforts meet with obstacles, through my grace you will overcome all of them. If the wheel bogs down in the mire and the cart gets stuck up I will lift the wheel with my own hand, put the cart on the road and make it go,' says He. 'Holder of the Chariot's Wheel' is one of the thousand names of God.

As against this, overborne by your 'ego' i.e., of 'I' if you do not beseech and obtain God's blessings, vain will be all your doings.

What God spoke giving a warning 'if you do not heed to my advice, you will surely ruin yourself' and what sage Vyasa wrote down and handed over to us as scripture is known as the '*Gītā*'.

Same is the scripture of Islam and also the scriptures of Christians, Jews, and Parsis. Cherish God in your memory and have your mind concentrated in Him and do things after praying for and obtaining His blessings.

No matter how small or big the attempt, even measures undertaken by Government do not fall outside the scope of this precept. Those objectives if they be not opposed to Dharma, should be worked for, only with His Blessings sought and with faith placed in Him. He who holds the Chariot's wheel in His hands will enable you to get over all obstacles and setbacks. He will lift for you the wheel if it bogs down in the mire.

'Rathangapani' is explained by commentators as 'wheel weapon'. The essential part of a cart is the wheel. The name will be appropriate to Mahavishnu. Therefore, that 'Rathangapani' and 'Chakrapani' are one and the same is the interpretation. What I have written is a new meaning born out of my devotion — full of faults and shortcomings though. Revered men will bear with me. I hope they would not raise objections. In the Sahasranama, immediately after the name 'Chakri' the name 'Rathangapani' follows in the same śloka. Hence, in the belief that giving a different meaning to 'Rathangapani' may not be far wrong, I have ventured to submit this interpretation. In the Upaniṣads and other scriptures, the performing of man's life's journey is compared to driving of a chariot. It is not seen anywhere in the Epics that 'Mahavishnu' took up the wheel of a chariot and used it as a weapon on any occasion.

YAMA'S INSTRUCTION TO NACIKETAS

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

THIS instruction is contained in what is known as the *Kāṭhakopaniṣad,* or, briefly, as the *Kaṭhopaniṣad.* It is one of the ten classical Upaniṣads commented on by Śri Śaṅkara. This Upaniṣad enjoys a very wide popularity which is partly due to its intrinsic poetic charm and partly to the interesting story and the dialogue form in which the teaching is imparted.

This story is found in very nearly the same form in *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa* (III. i. 8) and the *Mahābhārata* (Anuśāsana Parva ch. 71). The details of the story are as follows: Vājaśravas performed the Viśwajit sacrifice with a view to go to heaven. He gave a few old and useless cows by way of gifts (*dakṣiṇā*) to the officiating priests. It may be that he was a poor brahmin and had nothing better to give, or, what is more likely, he had a few valuable things to give but was unwilling to part with them. He wanted to retain them to himself and at the same time ensure a place for himself in heaven by making some symbolic gifts. He represents the type of men who want to make the best of both the worlds. Such a mentality is not uncommon. Most people desire to have it both ways, without making real sacrifices in this world they would like to ensure their happiness in the other world as well. Vājaśravas represents the class of men who think they could worship both God and Mammon in equal measure at the same time.

His young son, Naciketas, presents a sharp contrast to this mentality. He was sorely grieved at the poor gifts his father was making. He feared that by making such worthless presents his father would go, not to heaven, but to the other place, the dark and blissless region. Being a dutiful son he wanted to save his father from such a calamity. He therefore put it to his father that at least he might be given away as one substantial gift. Since his father did not pay heed to the proposal, he repeated it a second and a third time. At this his father got wild and said: 'I will make you over to Yama'. The word having been given, it had to be carried out. Naciketas was therefore sent to the abode of Yama. 'The fell sergeant, strict in his arrest,' had gone out on other business and Naciketas waited at his door for three nights without food. On returning home, Yama came to know of this and fearing dire consequences, he sought to propitiate the young brahmin by offering three gifts in lieu of the three nights of his fasting.

In the exercise of the first boon, Naciketas prayed that his father should not be greatly worried by his hasty decision, that he should have sound sleep and that, when he went back, he should be received with the usual warmth of love. 'Be it so', said Yama. In the exercise of the second, Naciketas wanted to know all about the sacred fire-sacrifice, the shape and size of the altar, the number of bricks to be used in its construction, the ingredients needed for it and so forth. Yama gave full instruction and was greatly pleased to find that his young disciple had grasped it so well and could recite the whole thing without any mistake. As a token of his appreciation he presented a beautiful garland to him and announced also that the fire-sacrifice will thereafter be known by the name of Naciketas. Fire-sacrifice is symbolic of Vedic ritual.

The first two boons relate to earthly and heavenly happiness. But these are perishable. Everlasting happiness can be secured only by acquiring Knowledge about man's real self. In the exercise of the third boon, Naciketas raised this question. 'When a man dies, some say that nothing remains, while others maintain that something survives. I would like to be instructed by you on this important point.' With this we come to the real subject-matter of the Upaniṣad. What has preceded is intended as a prolegomena to this.

It is a well-known practice among the teachers of the Upaniṣads to impart the highest instruction only after fully satisfying themselves about the fitness of the disciple to profit by it. They must feel sure that both intellectually and morally he is qualified to receive it. The most important condition is his spirit of renunciation. The hankering for pleasures arising from the objects of senses like garlands, scents and so forth must be completely absent in him. Whatever the temptation, he must be able to resist it firmly. He must be one who has reached the unshakable conviction that the pleasures of the senses only make for man's demoralisation and consequently one must have nothing to do with them.

The spirit of renunciation, to be complete, must relate to what this and the other world can give by way of pleasures. It is no good foregoing pleasures in this world in the hope of enjoying them with compound interest in the other world. That would only amount to exchanging this-worldliness for other-worldliness. The thirst for sense-pleasures must be eradicated root and branch. This is the most important condition. One cannot hope to serve both God and Mammon at the same time. The two are contradictories. One excludes the other. Consequently one is either a worshipper of God or a worshipper of Mammon, but not both. If one is convinced that abiding happiness cannot be derived from the enjoyment of sense-objects, then he must firmly turn his back on them and direct his attention to the acquisition of spiritual values.

In the *Sādhana Catuṣṭaya* laid down by Śri Śaṅkara, the second is called *ihāmutrārtha-bhoga virāgaḥ*. It means the renunciation of the search for sense-pleasures both in this and in the world to come. In his philosophical poems, especially *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi,* he lays repeated stress on this preliminary condition. 'He who is free from the terrible snare of the hankering after sense-objects, so very difficult to get rid of, is alone fit for liberation and none else, even though he be versed in all the six *śāstras*.' 'The shark of hankering catches by the throat those seekers after liberation who are trying to cross the ocean of *samsāra* with only a partial dispassion (*vairāgya*). It violently snatches them away and drowns them when they are only half-way through the ocean.' 'He who has killed the shark known as sense-objects with the sword of mature dispassion crosses the ocean of *samsāra,* free from all obstacles.' (*Vivekacūḍāmaṇi,* 78-80). 'If indeed thou hast a craving for liberation shun sense-objects from a good distance as thou wouldst poison' (*Ibid.*, 82).[1]

With a view to test the strength of his young disciple's spirit of renunciation, Yama offered tempting things and advised him to turn his mind from the idle enquiry relating to the survival of the self after death. 'Ask for long-lived sons and grandsons, for many cattle, elephants, gold and horses; ask for an extensive dominion of the earth and thyself live as many years as thou desirest. If thou deemest any boon like unto this, choose that as also wealth and long life. O Naciketas, flourish on this wide earth. I will make thee sharer of all pleasures — whatever pleasures are hard to attain in this world, ask for all those pleasures at thy will. These damsels with chariots and musical instruments, not such are obtained by men. Be served by these whom I give to thee. Pray, do not question about death.'[2] (I. i. 23-25).

But Naciketas knew his mind. He would not therefore allow himself to be deflected from the straight path which he had chalked out for himself. His reply was firm. 'O Yama, transient are these pleasures. They wear out whatever vigour that is in the senses. Let these chariots, dance and song be thine. Man is not gratified by wealth. Even the fullness of life is but brief. Having approached the undecaying immortals and knowing that eternal benefits can be had from them, how can a person seek such transient pleasures? Realising the worthlessness of the pleasures of song and love who will delight in long life?' (I. i. 26-28).

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[1] The translation is that of Swami Madhavananda.

[2] Prof. M. Hiriyanna's translation of the Upanishad is adopted throughout this paper.

Rejecting all the tempting things that Yama promised, Naciketas stood firm by his original question and said: 'That in respect of which there is this doubt (mentioned above) teach me what that is. Naught else but what is thus deeply hidden will I choose.' (I. i. 29). We may add that Lord Buddha and Jesus Christ were tested in the same way by the offer of glittering things and they also firmly refused to be satisfied with them. They could see no good in them.

When Yama found that Naciketas was not impressed in the least by the attractive things that he offered, but remained unruffled like a deep lake, he congratulated his disciple and said that he would be glad to have such students. He then came out with the answer.

But it was an intriguing one. He said: 'The good is one thing and the pleasant is quite another. They lead to opposite results. One who cares for his spiritual welfare must opt for the former. Only short-sighted fools will plump for the latter. The path to the good (Śreyas) is through *vidyā,* what is pleasant (Preyas) falls within the domain of *avidyā.* Vidyā or correct knowledge relates to Brahman who is the primal power, difficult to be seen, deeply hidden in the cave of the heart. It has to be realized through contemplation. One who realizes it goes beyond joy and grief.' Yama concluded by saying: 'I know such an abode is wide open to Naciketas' (I. ii. 1-13).

This account created a desire in Naciketas to know more about that Primal Being who is of the nature of bliss. 'Tell me what thou seest as other than virtue, other than vice; other than cause and effect and other also than the past as well as the future' (I. ii. 14). Acceeding to his desire, Yama proceeds to give a full account of that Primal Being. 'It is not born nor does it die; It cannot be traced to any source nor does it give rise to anything. It is unborn, eternal, everlasting. It is not slain when the body is slain. It neither slays nor is slain. It is subtler than the subtle, greater than the great. It is hidden in the cave of man's heart. One who has risen above desires sees it. Sitting He goes far and lying He marches all about. To know it much study is of no avail. Earnest desire is necessary' (I. ii. 18-20).

Undoubtedly this description of Brahman is excellent but it gives rise to two difficulties. Only three boons were granted to Naciketas. By the first he ensured mental composure to his father and by the second he learnt all about Vedic rites. By the third he wanted to know the destiny of the finite self. Unless there is a fourth boon, Naciketas has no right to ask about Brahman. Nor can Yama undertake to answer this further question. This is the first difficulty. The second arises with regard to the description of Brahman as that which is never born and never dies and as that which neither slays nor is slain. This is rather confusing. Nobody is ever under the impression that Brahman is born or that it dies. All know that It is eternal, deathless and everlasting. The denial therefore seems to be unnecessary.

The only way of resolving the two difficulties is by assuming that the finite self is identical with Brahman. If this assumption is granted, the question relating to the Jīva and the question relating to Brahman will merge into one. So far as Yama is concerned, since he has realized the identity of the two, he views them as but one question. It was to enable Naciketas also to view them as one that he began to speak about the good and the pleasant, *vidyā* and *avidyā* and that the gates of Everlasting Bliss were wide open to him. It was on purpose that Yama roused the curiosity of Naciketas about that Primal Being. All the introduction would else be purposeless and irrelevant. Instead of giving a straight answer to the question relating to the survival of the finite self, Yama dilates on Brahman solely with the object of enabling Naciketas to see that the finite self is non-different from the Infinite Self. The denial of birth and death to Brahman also becomes meaningful. Ordinarily we attribute birth and death to the Jīva but Yama avers that the same Jīva, as identical with Brahman, is neither born nor does it die. Attributes which belong to the Jīva in the state of ignorance are negatived in the state of enlightenment. As one with Brahman the Jīva is neither born nor does it die.

The Oneness of the Ātman or, to put it differently, the non-difference of Jīva and Brahman, forms the central teaching of all the Upaniṣads. It is set forth in diverse ways. The *Mahāvākyas,* occurring in different Upaniṣads, affirm the identity in a direct and forthright manner. Transferring the attributes of the Jīva to Brahman and of Brahman to the Jīva, as Uṣastha Cākrāyaṇa does in the question he addresses to Yājñavalkya (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* III. iv) is a subtle and indirect way of suggesting the identity. Here is another indirect method of enforcing the same conclusion. Answering four questions when there is provision only for three [3] and denying birth and death to Brahman, when such a denial is wholly uncalled for,. are intended to call attention to the Great Equation in a clever and unobtrusive way.

Is this Equation a mere convenient hypothesis which comes in handy to solve a riddle or is there any positive proof for it? It is not a mere hypothesis but something vouched for by the authentic experience of Yama. He was once a mortal himself and, after becoming a god by the practice of meditation, has since realized the identity of his self with the supreme Brahman. He therefore speaks from personal experience. That is the point of his telling Naciketas that this enlightenment cannot be obtained by study or reasoning but only by sitting at the feet of a teacher who has realized the great truth himself. 'Taught by an inferior teacher, this truth is not properly understood because it is very subtle. If it is taught as identical with oneself, then there is nothing like not grasping it. This knowledge is not attained by reasoning but only when it is taught by one who has realized his own identity with Brahman' (I. ii. 8-9).

Though the authentic affirmation of Yama is enough to carry conviction, yet he suggests two lines of reasoning to set all doubts at rest. In our every-day life we pass through the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. In the waking state we have diverse experiences. Their content is widely different. This moment we see one object and the next moment another. Though the object of knowledge goes on varying, there is one unvarying element and that is the feeling of self-consciousness. It is the consciousness of oneself as the standing witness of these diverse objects. 'That by which man perceives form, taste, odour, sounds and loving touches — through this only does one perceive all' (II. i. 3). The idea is that man experiences objects through the self which is of the nature of sentience and is altogether distinct from the objects that are experienced. When we pass from the waking to the dream state we have similar experiences there also. Though the sense-organs have become quiescent and we have consequently lost touch with the external world, yet owing to the activity of the mind, we have experiences similar to those of the waking state. It is the same element of consciousness which illumines them. 'That person who keeps awake in people asleep, shaping desire after desire — that alone is the pure; that is Brahman' (II. ii. 8). The fact that we remember our dream-experiences when we come to the waking condition is proof positive to show that consciousness is the common link between the two. 'That by which one perceives both what passes in dreams and in the waking state, having known that as the great and the mighty self, a wise man ceases to grieve' (II. i. 4). If the conscious principle which illumines the experiences of the two states were not the same, then the fact that we carry memories of the dream state into the waking condition will become inexplicable. Lastly we have the state of dreamless sleep when we experience nothing in particular. Consequently it is a state of bliss. That it is so is confirmed by the eager desire of the man who is rudely awakened to get back to it again. We remember the happiness that we enjoyed then, the next morning and exclaim: 'I slept well; I did not see anything'. This reminiscence would again be impossible of explanation except on the assumption that it is the same conscious principle that remains as the silent witness of the two states. It is therefore the continuous element in all the three states. It stands aloof as the mere witness of the experiences of the three states. It is therefore known as the *Jīva-sākṣin* — since it is pure consciousness having nothing to do with the particular experiences of different individuals, it follows that the *sākṣin* in all the Jīvas is the same. It is impossible to set a limit to it since such an attempt itself involves consciousness. It is impossible to conceive of a state when consciousness will lapse. 'The Knower's function of knowing can never be lost' (*Br. Up.*, IV. iii. 30). It follows that it is unlimited, everlasting and indestructible. The ultimate essence of both the Jīva and Brahman is this principle of consciousness. Thus the two are identical. 'As pure water poured into pure water becomes the same, so the self of a thinker also becomes one with the supreme' (II. i. 15).

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[3] In *Vedanta Sutra,* I. iv. 6, it is pointed out that the absence of the fourth boon is proof positive of the identity of the Jiva and Brahman.

Another line of reasoning is from the standpoint of existence. Let us analyze an existing object: say, a pot. On examination it is ascertained to be clay on which a particular shape and form has been imposed from utilitarian motives. The destruction of this form does not affect the underlying clay in the least. If the pot is broken, it exists as clay. Let us continue the analysis. Clay has its own form. It is lump-like. Let us assume that this form is also destroyed. Even then the particles of clay will exist as atoms. If the atoms are dissected further, they will exist as ultimate particles. They will never cease to exist in some form or other. The form, as we have mentioned in the case of the pot, is something superimposed from without. We have also seen that the destruction of the form leaves the original substrate untouched. This ultimate substrate, rid of all form, is mere *Existence,* mere *Sat.* 'How can it be seen except by him who believes "*It is*"' (II. iii. 12). 'This is Brahman and in it repose all worlds' (II. iii. 1). Just as fire which has no form of its own, assumes the form of any object with which it comes into contact, such as an iron-rod, even so Brahman which is pure existence assumes the form of its adjuncts and appears as God, Nature and Man. It is the common element in all that exists. It is the principle of reality in the Jīva also which is therefore identical with Brahman. The identity is established after a full examination of what is involved as the continuous principle in both knowing and Being. *Sat* is the essence of all existence and *Cit* is the essence of all knowing. The two merge in Brahman. Since bliss is its nature, we get the concept of *saccidānanda.*

This identity is the central teaching of the Upaniṣad. Yama emphasizes it again and again. This is what Naciketas must have had in his mind, though he put the question in a somewhat limited manner. When he said that by making worthless presents to the priests his father would only go to the dark and blissless worlds, he implicitly affirmed his belief in the reality of the self as an entity distinct from the body and in its survival and migration. Since he knew this already, it follows that he must have had something else in his mind. Yama rightly read this deeper meaning in the mind of his disciple and accordingly spoke of the absolute immortality of the soul and not merely its survival after the death of the body. 'The knowing Self is not born; neither does it die. It sprang from nowhere and nothing ever springs from it. It is unborn, eternal, everlasting and primeval. It is not slain when the body is slain' (I. ii. 18). It will be seen that in this account there is reference to the Jīva and also to Brahman. The Jīva is meant when it is stated that 'it is not slain when the body is slain'. The rest of the statement clearly refers to Brahman. The idea is that what Naciketas is taking to be the Jīva is really Brahman.

After bringing enlightenment to Naciketas in regard to the real nature of the Jīva, Yama turns to his original question and says that the self survives bodily death and its future depends on its deeds and its thoughts. 'Look, I shall tell thee how the self survives after death. Some selves enter the womb and become embodied; others become immovable objects, according to their deeds and according to their thoughts' (II. ii. 6). In the state of ignorance the self migrates from one embodied condition to another just to work out its store of accumulated merit and demerit. One life-time will be all too brief for the Jīva to attain moral equilibrium. The discrepencies that we observe between what a man seems to deserve and what he actually gets, also compel us to posit a 'before' and an 'after' for the soul. Our rooted faith in equity and justice will be rudely shaken otherwise. The conviction that justice will ultimately prevail is based on the belief that man has a future even as he has had a past.

But what is the evidence to believe that man has a self distinct from the body? The evidence is found in the design that is observed in the construction of the human body which is spoken of as 'the city of eleven gates'. Wherever we find parts being put together in a particular manner, we may take it that the construction is intended to serve a purpose. The purpose cannot be of the structure itself for it is insentient. It must therefore be of some sentient entity distinct from it. A house, for example, is constructed in a particular manner to serve the needs of some individual. By the same token we must believe that the body is constructed according to a design to suit the purposes of the dweller within it. That is the Jīva. This is the driving force behind all the activities of the body, seeing, hearing, breathing and so forth. Just as the destruction of the house does not mean the destruction of the man who lives in it, even so the dissolution of the bodily organism does not mean the death of the Jīva. The truth of the matter is that when the Jīva leaves the body, the latter collapses. 'When the self, residing in the body, slips off and deserts the same, what then remains here?' (II. ii. 4). Śrī Śaṅkara explains: 'When the Self goes away from the body, the aggregate of the senses and so forth, in a moment it loses its vitality, collapses and is lost; and, as in the case of citizens deserted by their ruler, nothing remains'.

The two lines of reasoning based on the implications of design and moral justice that have been adduced to prove the existence of the finite self may also be employed to prove the existence of the Cosmic Self or Īśvara. The universe is so created as to provide the proper environment for the finite selves to reap the good and bad consequences of their deeds. It exhibits design of a very complicate nature and we have necessarily to posit a vastly intelligent and powerful being to account for its creation. Such a Being is known as Īśvara. He is also the ultimate guarantor of moral justice. 'Whatever this — the whole universe — moves only when Prāṇa endures, having sprung from it. It is great; It is a fear; It is like a drawn weapon. Through fear of Him fire burns; through His fear the sun shines; through His fear the lord of the gods, wind and death, the fifth do speed' (II. iii. 2-3). 'The universe moves according to law. There would be no obedience to law if the Lord did not control the powerful rulers of the various worlds.'

After listening to Yama's discourse, the Upaniṣad adds, Naciketas realized in his own experience the identity of the Jīva with Brahman. It says also that such an experience will come to anyone else who becomes sinless like Naciketas. Ethical discipline of a sustained nature is required to become sinless. It is in two stages. In the first instance, the aspirant has to exterminate all evil thoughts from his mind and has to keep it calm and composed. 'Not he who has not ceased from wickedness, not he who is not tranquil, not he who cannot concentrate his mind, not even he whose mind is not composed can reach this Self through knowledge' (I. ii. 24). It is desire to enjoy the objects of sense that distracts the mind and the intellect and leads man astray like unruly horses. The need to keep the reins intact is beautifully brought out by the *ratha-kalpanā*. The body is the chariot, the intellect the charioteer, the mind the reins, the senses, the horses and sense-objects the road. The Jīva is the master riding in the chariot. If the Jīva is to reach its destination (the supreme abode of Viṣṇu) the horses must be kept in check by holding the reins intact. If they are loosely held, the horses will take the law into their own hands and throw both the chariot and the master within, into the ditch (I. iii. 3-9). The second stage of the discipline comprises Śravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana. One must listen to the expositions of a competent teacher on the import of the Great sayings (Mahāvākyas), reflect on them and then dwell on them without intermission (I. ii. 13).

One who has successfully completed the discipline will realize the identity here and now '*Atra Brahma samaśnute*' (II. iii. 14). Life in this world provides excellent opportunities for self-realization. Such opportunities are not available in any other world (II. iii. 4-5). It would be most unfortunate if man threw away the opportunities that are open to him in his present environment. If he rightly used them there is nothing to prevent his attaining the highest goal of life even now. After attaining *jīvanmukti* he lives for some time till his *prārabdha* is exhausted. Then he casts off his physical frame. But this does not bring any new attainment to him. The man who was already free has simply shuffled off the mortal coil. '*vimuktaśca vimucyate*' (II. ii. 1).

Naciketas proceeded by the path of enlightenment (*Jñāna Mārga*) to release here and now (*jīvanmukta*); Yama proceeded by the path of meditation (*arcirādi mārga* or *Devayāna*) to release by stages (*krama mukti*); Vājaśravas went by the path of vedic works (*dhūma mārga* or *pitṛyāna*) to the world of the gods (*svarga*).

This Upaniṣad consists of two chapters, each consisting of three sections. In these six sections it covers the whole ground of the Vedanta. No topic that is of any importance is left untouched. Its comprehensive character, the dialogue form in which the instruction is set forth, the study in character contrast between Naciketas and his father and the charm of its poetry — all contribute to its immense popularity. It is second only to the *Gītā* in this respect.

> In the spiritual sciences it is impossible from first to last that there can be any spiritual light in that soul which is impure. What can such a soul teach? It knows nothing. Spiritual truth is purity. . . . A vision of God, a glimpse of the beyond, never comes until the soul is pure. Therefore in the teacher of spirituality, purity is the one thing indispensable; we must *first* see what he *is*, and *then* what he *says*. . . . Because he is the transmitter. What will he transmit, if he has not that spiritual power in him? To give a simile — if a heater is hot, it can convey heat vibrations, but if not, it is impossible to do so. Even so is the case with the mental vibrations of the religious teacher which he conveys to the mind of the taught.
>
> — SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

RESURRECTION, COSMIC AND INDIVIDUAL

SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

EASTER in Christendom is considered to be the holiest of all holidays. It is the day on which man's eternal hope for immortal life was promised and demonstrated by the Prophet of Nazareth. It is the blessed day on which Jesus the Christ ascended from his tomb and granted his vision to his followers. It is the day on which he proved that death is not the end and inspired his followers, and empowered them to preach and teach the message of eternal and infinite life to a death-stricken world.

Some scholars claim that these accounts are not literally true. We do not know. We leave that for the scholars to deal with. We are not concerned with the facts as recorded by various writers. We want to go deeper and try to understand the principles underlying such records, and the legends that may have grown around them. When we do so we will have no difficulty in discovering a magnificent, universal truth which runs like a steady undercurrent beneath the froth and foam of legendary history and the differing opinions of various scholars. It is not the legends, or even the facts or incidents of any individual life, that are important to students of religion and philosophy. It is the principle, the basic law, the subtle truth that is demonstrated by means of these, that is the most important object of their study and analysis.

A man was born on a certain day of certain parents, attained certain objects in life at a certain specified time; died exactly at such and such a place and was buried precisely in such and such a spot. These are events, the exactitude of which is not very important. It is only when, with the help of these incidents, we try to understand the subtle principles that govern and control human destiny, by guiding our hopes and aspirations, that these incidents become significant to us. With such an attitude we should consider the happenings that have been described pertaining to the life of Christ. I have been rather surprised to find that a great many people in this predominantly Christian nation (the U.S.A.) do not at all believe in the authenticity of the details of the life of Christ. Yet they claim to be Christians. It does not really matter whether you believe or disbelieve in the truth of any of these events. But with the help of these data, factual or legendary, we should go into principles and find out what the fundamental aspirations of human life — that have been expressed and exemplified in such a unique life as that of Jesus the Christ — are.

It is a known fact that humanity, from the very dawn of creation, could never be reconciled with the stern reality of death. Although death thwarts every enterprise, hope and aspiration, almost at every step, yet none can ever get reconciled to the fact of death. Man wants to unveil the mystery of death and find out what is beyond. Always, in the heart of his hearts, he cherishes the thought that death cannot be the end. Somewhere beyond, in the depth of the unfathomable abyss of death, there must be a more abundant life. Such is the strong faith, the conviction, that is ingrained in the very nature of man.

Even today, in the face of our much-vaunted scientific discoveries and of the progress of human understanding and knowledge, do we really occupy any better position in regard to this most inscrutable of all mysteries? Have we been able to throw overboard, as an abject superstition, that eternal quest for life after death? Certainly, we have not. We cannot get over that innate feeling for immortality and infinite happiness. That eternal craving in man expresses itself in different ways and he naturally clings to almost anything to find a demonstration in outer nature of his inner conviction. That is why, even among the moderns, material scientists became interested in 'spiritualism,' which was an attempt to pierce the veil of that which lies beyond life.*

The ancients, however, followed a different method. Whatever in nature demonstrated, verified, or even suggested to them any clue about their cherished hope was eagerly accepted as a great symbol of the truth of immortality. They rejoiced to find any natural phenomena that would bring home to their poetic hearts the joyous message of immortality, or absolute existence. For that reason, religion began with the offering of spontaneous worship to the sun. The rising sun suggested to primitive man the idea of immortality. The sun rose in the morning like a new-born babe and attained youthful vigour and full effulgence in his noonday. In the afternoon of his life he began to decline, until in the evening he was overpowered by death and was buried under the earth, the ocean, or the western mountain. But lo! the next morning he appeared again with a smiling face. Is that not demonstration enough to convince one of immortality? The inner conviction, the faith of primitive man in infinite existence, power and happiness found a symbol in the sun, and he gave him the place of a great god.

Let us try to understand, in the light of the above psychological truth, the symbology behind the phenomenon of Easter — Easter, not only of the Christian church, but Easter, the universal symbol of immortality. For this purpose we shall not consider the historical questions as to when Christ was born, when he arose, and so on. We shall discuss only such details as will help to establish the universal principle, to give our Easter a broader and more universal meaning.

We learn from the early history of Christianity that Easter was not accepted in the calendar of the church year until the fourth century. If we go further back into history we find that festivals at Easter time were celebrated by many ancient races, long before the birth of Christ. Both the Aryans and the Semites had festivals at this time of the year. Some festivals were of a secular nature, while others were religious. The ancient Greeks and Romans celebrated the advent of spring with drinking, dancing, and all kinds of light-hearted frivolities. In many lands the New Year began in the early spring. The Hindus have handed down from ancient times various ways of celebrating the coming of spring. Today, the spring festival in India is popularly known all over the country as 'Holi'. The history of the development of this spring festival in India gives us a clue as to how a celebration gathers around itself, in course of time, facts and legends from the history of the different periods through which it passes. There are historical proofs to show that the ancient Hindu spring festival was, like that of the Greeks, concerned with merry-making. Later, during the revival of Vaishnavism, it was associated with the life of Krishna, the incarnation of God as Divine Love. Today, although some of the ancient forms of merry-making are not altogether missing, they are centred around the life of Krishna and are given an entirely religious colouring. Such adaptations of old forms, ceremonies, or rituals by a religion are well-known in history. It is possible that what happened in the religion of the Hindus regarding this spring festival may also have occurred in the Christian religion during the fourth century.

In the early Persian religion of Mithraism one finds a wonderful parallelism between some Mithraic rituals and the celebration of the Christian Easter. It would be a revelation to the student of religious history to study the amazing similarity of the legends and rituals of Christianity and those of Mithraism of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. The records that we have of Mithraism as it was preached and practised in ancient Persia lead us to believe that, like Zoroastrianism, it was of the same family as the earlier Vedic religion. The name, Mithra itself, recalls the name of the Vedic god, Mitra, or the sun-god, to whom the Gāyatri, the most important hymn of the Ṛg Veda, is addressed. Mithraism was a popular religion of ancient Persia and it later found its way to Greece and Rome.

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* This is a reference to Sir Oliver Lodge, Conan Doyle, and others.

One of the most important doctrines of Mithraism is that Mithra, the sun-god, is the mediator between humanity and the highest God, Ahurāmazda, and it is through Mithra's intervention that one may be presented to God. The student of history will be surprised also to find that the birthday of Mithra corresponds to the 25th of December. He was born of a virgin mother. She was thought of in a symbolic way as being a particular rock in the eastern mountains. As regards the conception of immortality and future life in this religion it was believed that through the power of Ahriman, the evil force, humanity is suppressed by the influence of death, as Mother Earth is affected by the influence of winter. There is a struggle between Ahriman, the evil force, and Mithra, the messenger of God, and eventually Mithra conquers and sets humanity free from death. It is through his intervention that man attains to the state of infinite existence and happiness, or everlasting life.

I should like to read a few lines from an article on 'Mithraism' by Professor M. A. Shastri, who is an authority on the subject :—

'There was a ceremony of the mock burial and resurrection of Mithra. Mithra's image which was made of stone was laid in the night on a bier, and in the morning it was taken in a procession to a tomb where it was buried. After a time a priest announced that the god, Mithra, had risen from his grave at which there was much rejoicing.'

This shows that the idea of resurrection, or rising from the grave, was also of a very ancient origin. In fact, as we discussed before, it is ingrained in the very nature of man. When man looks at natural phenomena he feels that death is only a period of depression, or suspension of life, and that after that comes a state of renewed power and more abundant life. Consequently, the season of winter followed by the advent of spring was considered by primitive man as the greatest symbol for the substantiation of his faith in resurrection. During the winter Mother Nature appears to be dead. She loses her glory, her beauty. In many places her expression remains buried under the snow. With the advent of spring she rises from her 'grave,' with a radiant smile of sunshine and warmth, wearing her gorgeous apparel of green with all its floral decorations.

To a poetic mind there could not be any greater symbol than the coming of spring to carry the conviction of resurrection. We people of today are so busy and so 'smart,' and have become so sophisticated, that we have lost all touch with nature. We are not even aware when the sun rises or sets. I have found many people in this country (the U.S.A.) who have never in their lives watched the rising of the sun. The sky-scrapers of modern cities block the horizon and by the time the sun peeps over them it is noon ! To many people living in large cities here the sun means nothing more than the mere letters, s-u-n. I have also been surprised to find that many do not know anything about the phases of the moon. To the primitive, poetic, and thoughtful mind the rising of the sun, the waxing and waning of the moon, and the changes of the seasons meant much more than they do to us, vain-wise, mechanical, modern beings. Modern man should establish a closer contact and feel his harmony with these natural phenomena.

The mountains, the sun, the moon, the stars, the floating clouds and the running waters were so many symbols to the ancient races and with the help of them they solved the deeper problems of life. They drank deep from the perennial fountain of Nature and were inspired by the study of her open book of wisdom. Sometimes it appears to me that man has done the greatest harm to his kind by writing books, building laboratories, museums, and planetariums. Much more could be learnt about the science, philosophy, and the art of life by studying directly the book of Nature. Truly did the mystic poet, Wordsworth, regret the fact when he said,

> 'Much it grieved my heart to think
> What man has made of man.'

However, proofs of nature do not satisfy the modern mind. It wants proof from the laboratory. But it can also be demonstrated by a scientific process that whatever is contained in the microcosm is contained in the macrocosm, and whatever is contained in a day, or a span of time of twenty-four hours, is also contained in a year. The span of a day is a wonderful symbol for a larger day, which is a year. If we extend this idea, we can discover the philosophy of centuries, ages, and eons from our comprehension of the philosophy of a day. The day turns in a circle ; the year also returns in a cycle. So do the millenniums, ages, and eons. Infinite time, in other words, is revolving in a cycle.

If that be so, then human life is also a relative span or link, like a period of twenty-four hours, in the infinite chain of time and has its periods of action and inertia, of life and death. Life is the daytime of human life ; death is the night which is followed by another daybreak, and another night. And it goes on and on until man, by realizing his infinite nature, breaks away from the ring of time, space, and causation. In the ancient Sanskrit literature life has been spoken of as a 'day' and death as a 'night'.

A characteristic feature in the language of the ancients is that the truths they discovered by observing nature were not expressed in an abstract way but instead, in a much simpler manner with the help of symbols, metaphors, and figures. For instance, in India and many other eastern countries the lotus was considered to be the symbol of life. After it blossoms the lotus remains for some time on its stem, unwithered. But it undergoes a very striking process of change every day. It appears very fresh and beautiful in the morning. Then, as the sun sets it appears to fade and wither. It looks almost dead. But the next morning, with the rising of the sun, it appears in its full beauty again. Thus, the same process repeats itself for days. This was a very meaningful phenomenon to ancient philosophers. They were not superstitious, but their minds were open. By observing this phenomenon of the lotus flower they felt that life, also, attains its perfection with the rising of the sun of knowledge and understanding. The sun of the life-force *Chetana*, or consciousness, appears again and again bringing into blossom the lotus of human nature.

Thus, the innate idea of immortality, or life after death, was consolidated in the minds of ancient poets and philosophers, from their observation and study of nature. At different times it was ritualised and demonstrated by different races in various ways. If we go back to the ancient Indo-Aryans we find that the symbolic faith in immortality developed in the form of a systematic school of philosophy in the Upaniṣads. The thinking mind could not always remain satisfied with poetic analogies from nature. It wanted to discover the truth on a basis of deeper observation and experiment, and the philosophy of immortality was established on the stronger foundation of logic, experiment, and *experience* by the philosophers of the Upaniṣads. There, for the first time, the ideal of individual immortality was systematically worked out in the shape of the theory of reincarnation.

Now, to return to the subject of Christian Easter. It is possible, as some scholars think, that the ancient symbolism of immortality was adapted by the church and woven into the facts of the life of Jesus, but even if this is so it does not detract from Christianity in any way. It is the philosophy that matters more than any ceremonials. A real seeker accepts the spirit and does not quarrel about the forms. For instance, it does not make any difference to me, a Vedantist, whether I celebrate my festival of immortality in the name of Christ, Mithra, or Krishna. To me, the spirit remains the same. When we understand the principle we do not give so much importance to the concrete illustrations of it.

As a Vedantist I will say that I have every respect for the celebration of the Christian Easter and I am just as enthusiastic as any devout Christian in my observance of it. My celebration of Easter is to remember again this day that man is immortal, that I am immortal, and that death is only a stage through which we pass, as we rest at night in order to rise again the next morning, full of vigour and enthusiasm. If, in order to confirm that philosophy, I need to associate my ideal with the observances of Christianity or Mithraism, I will gladly do so. Such would be a very helpful and spiritual interpretation of the festival of Easter.

I mentioned the spring festival in India which is today celebrated in connection with the life of Krishna. I would not at all be shocked if, historically, the festival has nothing at all to do with the life of Krishna . I would say, 'What does it matter? I love my Krishna. Therefore, it is my pleasure to associate any uplifting abstract ideal with his life.' The life of Christ, to me, stands as the symbol of immortality and infinite life, a concrete symbol of an abstract ideal. Whether the resurrection at Easter is factual, or whether it has been woven around the life of Jesus Christ, does not detract one iota from the spiritual significance of it.

Allow me to digress a moment. I find people here (in the U.S.A.) looking forward to Easter mostly because on that day they will wear new clothes of the latest fashion and will walk down the boulevards in the 'Easter Parade'. But we should remember that Easter is not meant only for that. Nevertheless, I like the idea behind this custom because it again demonstrates to me the philosophy of reincarnation. The fashion is a symbol of a deeper truth. The soul casts off its old coverings and puts on a new body after death. So, to remember that wonderful philosophy, let us on Easter cast off our old clothes and put on new and pretty ones. If the fashion, the custom, could be understood in that symbolic sense, I would say that Easter is certainly the day of days to display your new clothes.

The ideal of resurrection, life after death, was considered by Hindu philosophers in two different aspects, cosmic and individual. I will give you a short outline of the cosmic aspect of resurrection according to Hindu philosophy.

Creation has no beginning or end. It is going on in a cycle and whatever is in creation is never destroyed; it goes back to its source and completes the cycle. After the completion of one revolution of the wheel everything goes back to the causal state and remains for some time in its potential form. This state of rest is called *Praḷaya.* Then, again, it begins to manifest. This process has been going on from eternity, and it will go on to infinity. The period of one complete revolution in the cycle of manifestation is called a *Kalpa*, and it lasts for several million years. Creation progresses through different stages of evolution and when the evolution is completed it goes into its causal state where there is no manifestation. In that state, however, it contains all the potentialities that were worked out throughout its kinetic state. Whatever was achieved during one cycle of expression is retained during the state of *Praḷaya,* as man retains his potentialities during the state of sleep.

Let us draw an analogy with our daily experience of sleep. When we go to sleep we do not think that everything we have done will be lost. We know that our experiences and possibilities will lay in a dormant state and will find expression again the next morning, in the dawn of the new day. In a similar manner, creation goes on in the succession of 'day and night'. The night of cosmic creation is *Praḷaya* and the day is *Sṛṣṭi* and *Sthiti,* or projection and progression. Thus, there is a 'resurrection', or a coming into new life, of the cosmos.

Individually, life repeats itself in the succession of life and death, according to the law of reincarnation and *karma*. This eternal merry-go-round of births and deaths ceases when an individual realizes his fundamental and essential Divine nature. Until that state is attained he goes from experience to experience, passing through many incarnations. I will not go into the details of reincarnation today as many of you are familiar with the subject. Those who are not would profit by making a study of it.

I would like to point out that if you could remove from your minds the sectarian ideas and dogmas regarding your innate conviction of immortality, you would discover in the theory of reincarnation a more logical philosophy and greater justification for the struggles one must go through in life. I would not compare the idea of Christian salvation, as it has been worked out in the theory of resurrection, with the attainment of absolute perfection as discussed under the subject of reincarnation. But, I should like to point out to you that both of these theories grew, fundamentally, from the same innate urge for immortality and primarily they are the same. One states that you will gain immortality after you rise from your grave. Through the intervention of a Messiah you will attain eternal happiness in heaven. Whereas, the other declares that you are immortal right now. You do not have to wait for Judgement Day to recover your birthright of immortality, nor do you have to go to a heaven for the enjoyment of divine bliss. Know it now, and you are free. If you do not realize it, you have to go through the process of repeated births and deaths until you *know the truth.*

We must gain the conviction that we are not mortal. We must know that death interferes only with the physical body and that time, space and causation have power only over our material life. If we can realize that beyond the physical there is an Entity which is our real, higher Self, infinite and absolute in nature, untouched by time, and if we try to live up to that conviction every day of our lives and try, at every step, to manifest and bring into expression that infinite Being which is within us — then, it will be the consummation of the celebration of the festival of immortality. For such a celebration we would not have to wait one long year for Easter Sunday to come. We would be able to celebrate it every day, throughout the year, and every moment of our lives would be saturated with the joy of that grand festival of eternal life — the spiritual and universal Easter.

It is very good to be born in a certain sect and have its training: it brings out our higher qualities; but in the vast majority of cases we die in that little sect, we never come out or grow. One says that these are all stages which one has to pass, but one never gets out of them. . . . I believe in thinking independently. I believe in becoming entirely free from the holy teachers; pay all reverence to them, but look at religion as an independent research. I have to find my light, just as they found theirs.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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He is but the counterfeit of a man who has not the life of a man.

— SHAKESPEARE.

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Contemporaries appreciate the man rather than the merit; but posterity will regard the merit rather than the man.

— CALEB C. COLTON.

MAN IN THE EYES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

A. C. BHATTACHARYA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA was neither a philosopher nor a man of letters. He was neither a preacher nor a reformer. A modest and humble man was he, coming from a village, speaking in his own village dialect; but still he had drawn and has been drawing the attention of many a great mind from almost all walks of life. In his own simple way he has said some of the greatest truths of human life and the most interesting part of it is that his words have direct appeal and one inevitably feels that they cannot be dismissed so easily.

He speaks religion but not this or that religion. He was so much saturated in it that he could not actually stand any other discussion. Contradictory as it may appear, we find all possible facets of human life discussed in his talks. Thereby we find a complete picture of religious life. We understand from him that religious life is not one of the many different fields of human life, e.g., club life, family life or political life. It is not limited to attending Sunday prayers only. It is all-comprehensive. It includes diverse aspects of human activities.

Religion, as Sri Ramakrishna says, aims at self-realization or God-realization. It demands therefore our true self to reveal itself within us, the God in us to manifest itself. This in turn is possible only by a total transformation of our personality. Transformation does not come from without; it is 'Yoga', an integration of all the different tendencies working in different directions within us. Thus religion naturally takes into account these different propensities. It embraces all those fields of activity with which a person is connected.

Thus Sri Ramakrishna speaks of man connected with so many different sorts of environment supplied by society. His analysis of man and the larger society within which he moves about is extremely interesting. It is a scientific analysis. He does not confine himself to this analysis only. He also mentions the aim and ideal of human life. Here he is completely in tune with all the great prophets and seers. The ideal he speaks of is no doubt an ideal for us but surely not for him. In fact, the ideal turned into a reality for him, an actual part and parcel of his life. This is the reason why he emphasizes so much the practical mode of achieving the end. He is neither theoretical nor esoteric. His teachings are accompanied with practical demonstrations, i.e., self-demonstrations. As one of his direct disciples has said, 'so long we used to go to Brahmo Samaj and other places and hear the religious discourses, God appeared to be very very far off. But when we went to Him, lo, the Man converses with God. We could hear him talking but alas the words of the other party did not reach us'.[1]

Sri Ramakrishna does not meddle in any utopia, metaphysical or moral, for the human society, as we find in Plato or Kant. Neither does his analysis of man and society lead him to discover any scientific law working in the process of evolution and thence predicting any sort of brilliant destiny awaiting for the entire mankind, as we find in Karl Marx. He has spoken the simple but the highest truth in plain but most effective language. Here lies his greatness.

The realization of the *summum bonum* of life and the concentrated effort required of every man who is so inclined, is the main theme of the subject we have proposed to discuss here. Because this destiny of human being is not a scientific culmination of the chain of evolution, it is not the least deterministic so far as we are concerned. Every man has to exert himself and make effort for this realization and in this respect it is a matter of free will and nothing else. But there is also the other way to look at things. A realized soul sees in all these activities of human beings, nothing but divine determinism. But that is too much for us to depend upon and rest idle. We are to make positive efforts to realize the supreme end of human life.

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[1] *Sri Ma Darshan*, Swami Nityatmananda, Vol. I, p. 196.

First of all we shall discuss Ramakrishna's analysis of man and the society within which he lives.

We gather from the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna that variety is the essence of creation. It is a travesty of truth to say that all persons are equal and it is equally futile to expect that someday everybody would reach the state of perfection simultaneously. Variety, it may be said, is the very basis of creativity, without it the world would lose all its charms ; initiative would be lost ; freedom of will and moral life would be of no significance. There is equality neither in the human sphere nor in other spheres of life, material or vital. He says : ' The scriptures say, " Āpo Nārāyaṇaḥ ", that is, " water is God ". But some water may be used for sacred purposes, while some for gargling, some other for cleaning utensils or washing clothes only, but the latter cannot be used for drinking or holy purposes.[2] Among animals there are good and wicked ; there are ferocious animals like tigers. Among trees, there are some which have nectar-like fruits and there are those that yield poisonous fruits also. So among men there are good and bad, honest and dishonest. There are persons having attachment as well as persons of detachment." [3]

It is quite interesting to note that modern thinking is somewhat obsessed with this idea of ' equality ' and there is no doubt that it is in the majority of cases an uncritical acceptance of something new. The impact of French Revolution and Marxian philosophy may be said to be responsible for it. New ideas bring with them an element of romance also, particularly when they come from persons who have achieved some material success. Thus we see a man of the stature of Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar putting the same question to Ramakrishna, when the latter went to his residence. The well-known answer given by Sri Ramakrishna to this question is at once penetrative and humorous. " If all men are equal, then why have I come to see you ? Have you grown two horns on your head ? " In fact, equality from our intellectual standpoint is a cheap political slogan ; a scientific analysis reveals that nowhere in this creation there is any equality whatsoever. Of course, there is a different plane in which there is a perfect equality everywhere. We mean the spiritual plane, which once attained, makes us same-sighted.

Then one can see everything in himself and see himself in everything. This equality is far more comprehensive than the one preached by political thinkers. It is not an equality in the human species only but a perfect sense of ' sameness ' everywhere in the creation.

We need not, however, assume that status before attaining it and rest content with a sense of complacency, that after all we are all equal. Here also Sri Ramakrishna is more practical.

In theological works the question of equality takes a slightly different form than what we find in political theories. Usually it is argued that since all human beings are inherently divine, there cannot be any distinction between man and man. It is true, Sri Ramakrishna says, that gold is there hidden in everybody but in some it is hidden very deep under several layers of earth whereas in others only a thin layer obstructs the manifestation of the gold and so it is easy for them to realize God. Elsewhere we find him using different similes with regard to this question. He says that the rays of the sun fall on every object, on leaves of trees, on mountains, on earth, on water and also on the mirror. No object reflects back the sunlight as the mirror.

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[2] *Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita*, Vol. I, p. 32.

[3] *Ibid.*

So is the case with human beings. Like monads of Leibnitz, men differ with regard to their power of reflection and appetition.

TYPES OF PERSONS

Broadly speaking, there are three types of persons found in this world; they may be called, the perfect, the aspirants, and the worldly, i.e., those who want nothing but God, those who want God but have not completely got rid of their hankering for the world and lastly, those who prefer nothing but the world.

The first type of persons are of course very very few in number. They are solely inclined towards God or spirit. From the religious norm, they are regarded as superior in comparison to others. Such persons know God and nothing but God, desiring always to keep themselves in Yoga (union) with God. No worldly temptation however, great, can desist them from that path. The Buddha, from the known history, may be cited as an example of this category of persons. Of course, there are many more, both in ancient and recent times, but we have chosen the Buddha particularly with an intention to point out as to how the minds of such persons work in the midst of all possible worldly attractions. It appears, as if, these persons cannot be contained in those attractions of life which are generally regarded worthwhile to attain. The kingdom, the stately palace, the young wife, loving children and what not, but nothing could stand on the Buddha's way. In short, their mental make up is just the reverse of the worldly-minded.

Objectively speaking, it is quite a difficult job to understand the working of their mind. The science of psychology, which tries to frame general and universal principles that determine our mental life, can only brand them as 'abnormals'. A more liberal appreciation may perhaps tempt one to classify them as 'supernormals'. Whatever it may be, the fact cannot be ignored that there do exist such persons and the most interesting thing about them is that even from the pragmatic point of view they prove themselves to be a continuous source of inspiration for others in society and they go on inspiring people for generations to come. Socially speaking, persons coming in contact with them, direct or indirect, prove to be good and useful citizens.

Another example of this class of persons, whom we cannot help mentioning here is Nachiketa, as he has been portrayed in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*. The story of Nachiketa gives us a clue as to the strength of character that is universally found in persons of this type. Nothing short of self-knowledge was acceptable to Nachiketa. Yama was tempting him in various ways, but the young boy courageously refused to fall for any of them and stood firm in his demand for self-knowledge. A tremendous power of will and an enormous strength of character are always found in Yogis. They never yield to pleasures.

The second type of persons (the aspirants) are relatively more in number than the first. Most of them want to seek God while remaining within the household. They do not possess that extreme sense of detachment for the world as it is found among the Yogis. In fact, those that have a natural distaste for the worldly life are very rare and the majority of seekers of God belong to this group. If we call the former extremists, these people are moderates; if the former are non-compromisers, these people somehow bring about a compromise between household life and extreme asceticism. Our ancient Upaniṣadic Ṛṣis were householders. They had wives and children but they lived the household life with moderation, discipline and detachment. They followed rigourously the rules and regulations of the four different Āśramas, viz., Brahmacharya, Gārhastya, Vānaprastha and Sanyāsa. Even among kings and rulers we find great self-realized souls. They were called Rajarṣis. The code of the Āśrama discipline was applicable to them too. The life of King Bharata, after whom it is said our country is called Bhāratavarṣa, is a glorious example of how even a great king like him, ruling over a vast country like India, naturally used to all possible comforts and luxuries of a royal life, throws away everything as soon as he attains the age of a Vānaprastha. He goes to the forest renouncing everything, leads an ascetic life, doing everything with his own hand. The question that crops up naturally in our mind now is, is it feasible ?

Let us again, take the case of the Pandavas, who too belonged to this class. They too were householders. But so great was their devotion to God that they got God Himself as their companion, friend, philosopher and guide. So far as worldly matters were concerned they fought for the right cause, won the battle and got back the kingdom and the throne of which they were deprived. But the most interesting part of the whole plot of the great epic *Mahābhārata* consists in the Pandavas' retirement to the Himalayas after establishing a righteous reign over the entire country. It was just the time to think exclusively of God, after a very hard life of storm and struggle and fulfilment of duty. Again the same question challenges the mind, is it feasible ? Perhaps such doubts may be removed if we cite the instance of Mahatma Gandhi in recent history. It is true that great men remain controversial in their lifetime and are rarely judged with a proper perspective in their own age. Still there is one fact about Gandhi that can never be ignored. It is his strong sense of detachment while living this worldly life. Here is a man struggling all through his life to give a rightful place to the down-trodden, suffering gladly all possible privacies and imprisonments from an alien rule and sacrificing everything to free the country from the clutches of the foreign rulers. But no sooner success dawns, he silently withdraws himself from the scene of active politics. He demands nothing for whatever he had done. This chapter of Gandhi's life gives him a very high place among householders.

Thus we find that a great amount of courage, determination and self-control are the primary characteristics of persons of this class. Sometimes Sri Ramakrishna appears to be all praise for the latter.[4] He says, 'Those who have left the household for the sake of God-realization will remember Him always and there is nothing special about it, but they are the brave ones who seek Him while remaining within the household.' In another place he says, 'One who seeks God while remaining within the household is just like a man who tries to see a marriage procession while carrying a load of nine maunds on his shoulder'. This explains how difficult a task it is to try to realize God while performing a heavy burden of duties as a householder.

The exact mental attitude of an ideal household *bhakta* has been very nicely depicted by Sri Ramakrishna by another example. He says that there is no harm if the boat remains in the water, but the water should not get into the boat. What he means is that a seeker of God may remain in the world but worldliness must not be there within him. This statement of Sri Ramakrishna is all the more significant because it is through this statement that he recognizes the fact that a spiritual aspirant may choose either of the two Āśramas, Sanyasa or Gārhasthya, according to his natural evolvement. It is the attitude of renunciation and dispassion that makes all the difference. No doubt, the household Āśrama is a more difficult place for this task but still persons having strong determination and a perfect detached view of life do attain the goal in any Āśrama.

Now, the third type of persons (the worldly) constitute the major part of human society. They are true materialists. They believe physical enjoyment to be the *summum bonum* of human life. Such persons have absolutely no spiritual leaning. They never feel any inner urge for soul-seeking or God-realization. They take pleasure in worldly affairs, indulge always in worldly pursuits, busy always with worldly problems. Sri Ramakrishna has very aptly compared the pandits, who are mere scholars and have no dispassion, to vultures which soar very high in the sky but have their eyes always fixed on the charnel pit. However, quite a good number among them appear to be religious too. They usually believe in conventional religion and that too, not without any profit motive. We think that those theories of religion which explain the origin of religion from fear, worldly gain etc., are quite true so far as persons of this type are concerned. But most of them, by disposition, are quite far from what we really mean by religiosity. Their worldly interests are so obvious that they do not feel at home in the company of genuinely religious persons ; they are not eager to hear topics like devotion to God, discussed by them. Sri Ramakrishna cites examples of persons who accompany their friends from Calcutta on a boat to Dakshineswar for a pleasure trip. The friends come to visit Sri Ramakrishna. Finding him discussing religious topics, they get interested and stop there. But the others, their companions, cannot relish such discussions. They feel bored and restless, so much so that having failed to persuade their friends to leave the place, they get up and go out. While leaving the room they tell them that they would wait for them in the boat. Such is the attitude of the worldly.

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[4] Perhaps to encourage the household Bhaktas.

The company of saints, it is said, has a great influence in turning the mind towards God. But alas, there are persons in this world, as Sri Ramakrishna says, on whom the saintly company has very little effect. It is believed that when 'Malayanil'[5] blows, the ordinary trees that come into its contact, turn into sandal trees. But there are exceptions to this general rule. There are some trees which do not change that way. Such is the rigidity of disposition of the worldly.

We have seen that there are three types of persons in this world. They can be called 'Mukta' (free), 'Baddha but Mumukṣu' (though fettered yet desirous to be free), and 'Baddha' (fettered) respectively. Sri Ramakrishna compares human beings with the fish that are caught in the fisherman's net. Some fish are so alert that as soon as they are caught, they tear open the net and escape, while there are some who constantly carry on their efforts to free themselves so long as the net remains within the water. Of the latter, a few succeed in liberating themselves. But the great majority of fish do not know that they are caught in the net and are going to be killed. The cleverer and the stronger ones are the 'Mukta Jivas' who break the worldly bondage as soon as they realize that they are getting bound. Different from them are the 'Mumukṣus' who carry on their efforts to liberate themselves while remaining in the world. The 'Baddhas' are those who are not even aware of the bondage. They consider themselves quite safe in the state of bondage, knowing very little that death is hanging just over their head.

This in short is how Sri Ramakrishna classifies man. This analysis of Sri Ramakrishna is a scientific one since it is based on the psychological dispositions of human beings.

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[5] A particular breeze called 'Malaya'.

We may worship a picture as God, but not God as picture. God in the picture is right, but the picture as God is wrong. God *in* the image is perfectly right. There is no danger there. This is the real worship of God. But the image-God is a mere *pratikti*.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

* * * *

One cannot always be a hero, but one can always be a man.

— GOETHE.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The article 'Swami Vivekananda and His Message' is adopted from the speech delivered by Sardar Ujjal Singh, the Governor of Madras, on the occasion of the birthday celebration of Swami Vivekananda at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras on the 12th February 1967.

Sri P. Seshadri is a long-standing devotee of Sri Ramakrishna from Kerala, and is now residing in Bombay.

Sri C. Rajagopalachari is well-known and needs no introduction to our readers.

Prof. M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, a retired Professor of Philosophy of the Annamalai University has been regularly contributing to the *Vedanta Kesari* and other philosophic and religious journals.

Swami Gnaneswarananda is the late founder-leader of The Vedanta Society of Chicago. His article 'Resurrection, Cosmic and Individual' forms the text of a speech delivered by him on March 27, 1932, an Easter Sunday. It has been made available to us by Mrs. Mallika Clare Gupta, a disciple of the Swami, for which we are thankful to her. Mrs. Gupta informs that the speech was taken down by Miss M. Ernstein.

Dr. A. C. Bhattacharya, M.A., Ph.D., is Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, K.N. Government College, Gyanpur, Varanasi, and is a new contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari.*

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE WORLD ACCORDING TO RAMANUJA, By Fr. Antony Manalapuzhavila, O.C.D. Pub.: St. Joseph's Pontifical Seminary, Alwaye, Kerala. Price Rs. 4.70. D/cr. 8 vo. Pp. X+92.

The author's preface carries two express objectives, which a work of this kind may aim at, *viz.* (1) to provide and promote for the Catholic Church "ecumenical dialogues with the non-christians", and (2) to show that a "thorough" and "sympathetic" study of Hinduism, with "a positive and constructive approach" would substantiate "the conclusion that all that is true in it finds its fulfilment only in Christianity". The author also points out that both in India and abroad a great deal of interest has been evinced in "the study of the Vedas and the Upanishads and especially the philosophy of Sankara" and of "the Sankarites", whom he describes as "Idealists and Monists". He reminds the reader "that in India there are also Realists and Monotheists," foremost among them being Ramanuja. However, a study of this kind, based exclusively on translations though claiming to be critical, runs the risk of being rejected on several points, both by the Sankarites and by the Ramanujites. The Appendix, which gives a detailed "index of the original thesis", — something in the nature of a "Saravali" — shows how vast the subject is, and how cursory and inadequate a 82-page summary-treatment of it must turn out to be.

The entire work of Fr. Antony is divided into three parts, — nature of the world, origin of the world and estimate of Ramanuja's philosophy. The first part includes a discussion of the theory of nescience and the concept of *Maya*, with Ramanuja's refutation of the theory. The second part treats of the various theories of the origin of the world dealt with by Ramanuja, and presents the Visistadvaitic notion of causality and of Cosmic Causation, with Ramanuja's idea of God as "the material and efficient cause of the world". In the third part the author attempts "a critical examination" of the philosophy of Ramanuja, highlighting the points of agreement between Ramanuja and St. Thomas and the Thomists. Such comparisons are fruitful, and one would wish there were more of them and in a fuller measure.

A full appraisal of Fr. Antony's work, dealing in detail with its merits and short-comings, is obviously beyond the scope of a brief review. But a few of its more prominent features may just be mentioned:

(1) The deeper aspects of Ramanuja's Visistadvaita, with their moral and religious implications, more than the ontological, remain untouched. The *tattva* in Visistadvaita is not divorced from the *hita* and the *purushartha*.

(2) Reality for Ramanuja is one in the sense of an "Organic unity". The unity does not preclude difference, while the difference does not imply *prthak-siddhi* or isolation of the factors that enter into the unity. A correct and more detailed treatment of the concept of *Aprthak-siddhi*, so vital to Visistadvaita, is called for.

(3) Ramanuja does *not* hold the union of body and soul at the level of creation to be "accidental". If "the root cause" of this union is "Karma", and "the final cause" is "release from worldly existence", the union can by no means be described as "accidental".

(4) The very concept of creation is unique in the context of Vedanta. That is why it fails to fit in with the familiar categories applicable to other theories of creation. The author's weighment of Ramanuja's theory against the Christian doctrine of Creation is not altogether objective or free from set notions.

(5) The reference to Schrodinger, though in a foot-note, is suggestive, and may well deserve a closer study for purposes of comparison. It would have been much appreciated, if the author had attempted to show how Ramanuja's position is an improvement on that of Descrates, Locke, Hume or Kant, instead of merely contrasting these against Ramanuja.

(6) The author's summary of Ramanuja's views on the nature of consciousness is clear, but the concept of original sin colours his interpretation of the nature and existence of individual selves.

(7) Dr. R. V. Smet's charge of Pantheism and anthropomorphism — cited by the author — is based on a misconception, — both in regard to Ramanuja's view of God as "Person" and in regard to the relation of 'part' and 'whole' or of 'mode' and 'substance', as interpreted by Ramanuja.

Ramanuja's God has an *aprakrta-divya-mangala-vigraha*, and His eternal realm is of *Suddha Sattva*.

(8) Far from "vitiating his high conception of God" Ramanuja's presentation of the Supreme establishes both His transcendence and His immanence.

(9) The conception of *Avatar* should not be dismissed as merely mythological. Its essence is drawn from the authority of *Sruti*.

(10) Acceptance of Veda as *pramana* is not "blind belief" or "uncritical adherence to supposed revelation". It is recognition of the authentic light of spiritual intuition in realms that lie beyond bare reason.

(11) *Vedanta Sara* and *Vedartha Samgraha* should not be confused. The first is Ramanuja's own condensed version of his *Sri Bhasya*, while the second is an independent treatise giving the gist of the Upanishads as presenting the philosophy of Visistadvaita.

K. SESHADRI.

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN MODERN BENGAL: By Benoy Gopal Ray. Pp. 244. Price: Rs. 10.50. Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, India.

This is a valuable symposium of what may, perhaps be styled the religious renaissance of modern Bengal, from the advent of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It is on a wide canvas that the author has drawn a picture, and his account comprises not only the religious, (mass) movements properly so-called but religious organizations and Ashramas. The earliest, the Brahmo Samaj, it is related, gave rise to "Brahma Dharma" which Maharshi Devandranath Tagore propounded, which drawing inspiration from the Upanishads, was 'Dualistic' in content, with a belief in the efficacy of prayer in this life and hereafter (p. 15).

There is a comprehensive account of the Ramakrishna Mission, and it is rightly emphasised that it has been mainly through this organization that Vedantic gospels of union and love had been taught to the West, even as Western values have come to be accepted by our country (p. 51). The author treats of Chaitanya's cult, and its subsequent ramifications which established the fundamentals of Vaishnavism on an empirical basis.

Saktaism is dealt with and the political repercussions in its wake have also been pointed out (pp. 68-74).

The lives and teachings of twelve "gurus" form a valuable adjunct to this book.

Modern saints like Sri Aurobindo, Nigamananda, Dayananda, and a host of the other members of the holy fraternity, are alluded to, and the core of their teachings has been set out.

A very interesting account of the twelve kinds of Gurus in the Hindu Sastras is given at p. 135.

"Aboriginal" religions are described briefly (pp. 147 to 156), with pointed reference to their essentials.

Jainism and Buddhism, come in for special treatment (pp. 157 to 172).

Chapter IX gives a very comprehensive account of Islam, and the author has approached the subject with objectivity and impartiality.

Not less exhaustive is Chapter X which deals with Christianity, and the author's plea that Christianity having come to be naturalized in the soil of India, aggressive proselytising should be given up, which, one hopes, will not fall on deaf ears.

Religion is universal, but a universal religion, he maintains, is only a 'utopia' (p. 225). However it will be one, which will consist not merely in a cold and colourless performance of duties, but in a tacit belief in God, who is both in and beyond us, and which will establish an intimate personal relationship with Him.

S. Rajagopalan.

TELUGU

Andhra-Tatparya Sahita SRIMAD BHAGAVAD-GITA: Pub.: Sri Sitaramanamasankirtana Sangham, Sri Ramanama-Kshetram, Guntur-4, Pocket size, Pp. 399, Price Rs. 1.25.

The zeal and services of Sri Sitaramanama Sankirtana Sangham, Guntur, in the propagation of our religious and devotional literature is well-known. In spite of there being a glut of Gita-literature, their edition, under review, of the Bhagavad-Gita with Sri P. Sriramamurti's Tatparya is specially commendable. (i) The verses, printed in bold type and absolutely free from errors, are attractive. (ii) The chaste and mellifluous style of the gloss makes the reader feel entertained and compels admiration. (iii) The publishers' and the commentator's introductory notes as those of Sri Palle Purna-Prajnacharya and Sri Kasi Krishnacharya are of informing value to the earnest student of the Gita.

N. Bhaktavatsalam.

BOOKS RECEIVED

FIFTEEN YEARS OF PLANNING: (Pictorial publication) Pub.: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Delhi-6. Pp. 92, Price Rs. 3.

SADHANA: By Swami Shivananda, Pub.: The Divine Life Society, P.O. Shivanandanagar, Dt. Tehri Garhwal, U.P., Himalayas, Pp. 719 + xxxi, Price Rs. 12.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAM, NARENDRAPUR, 24 PARGANAS

Report for 1963-66

Started in North Calcutta immediately after the Bengal Famine of 1943, this Ashrama of the Ramakrishna Mission at first served as a Home for poor and orphan boys, but since its removal to its present site in 1957, it has extended its activities into other fields.

It conducts now: (1) a Students' Home with over 400 boys, (2) a College (Mahavidyalaya) started in 1960 with admission only to students seeking an Honours Degree; the college is entirely residential having at the end of the period under report 260 students on the roll. Three batches of students, 37, 62 and 78, have appeared in the University Examination in 1962-63, 1963-64, 1964-65 respectively; the percentage of passes have been 86, 90 and 97 in the respective years. (3) A Multipurpose School (Vidyalaya) started in 1958. It has two sections, one for Bengali medium and the other for English medium. The number of students on the roll in 1963, 1964, and 1965 was 391,384 and 448 respectively. The results during the above years were:

	No. of Students appeared at the Higher Secon. Exam.	*No. of Students Passed*
1963	71	66
1964	82	82
1965	68	68

The School has a well-equipped workshop where the students can work under the supervision of teachers.

(4) A Senior Basic School (started in 1960) with 250 students at the end of the period under report.

(5) A Central Library which caters to the needs not only of the teachers and students of the Ashrama but for the members of the public as well. The number of volumes in the Library is 35,082 and the number of journals received is 59.

A commercial institute is run from 1958 to teach Shorthand and Typewriting. The Ashrama also offers opportunities to learn Tailoring, and other crafts.

(6) There is a Blind Boys' Acadamy with 90 boys at the end of the period under report. There are courses in General Education, music and other crafts open to these blind boys. Efforts are being made to rehabilitate the blind boys who have completed their education.

Besides the above, social service camps and manual labour programmes form an important feature of the education imparted in the Ashrama. Several magazines and news bulletins are published by the institutions of the Ashrama. Seminars and symposia are frequently held and educational tours are conducted. In keeping with the traditions of the Ramakrishna Mission, the Ashrama serves the cause of Harijan Welfare, by giving education to the Harijan children in four centres.

The Institute of Social Education and Recreation of the Ashrama has been engaged, ever since it was started in 1956, in Youth Leadership Training, Mass Education, and Rural Uplift Work. Refugee relief work was undertaken by the Ashrama during the 1963 communal tension in and around Calcutta.

The Managing Committee thanks the Union and State Governments as also the numerous donors for their kind help in the growth of the Ashrama.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION BOYS' HOME RAHARA, 24 PARGANAS

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD FROM APRIL '63 TO MARCH '66

The Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home, Rahara, was started in the year 1944 initially catering to the needs of the poor and orphan boys. It has at present (at the end of the period under report) 731 orphan boys, 151 paying students, 212 students in the Basic Training College, 23 students of Librarianship Training Centre and 20 students in the Three-Year Degree College Hostel, in all 1137 resident students. There are 10 monastic workers and 276 other workers of various grades to take care of these students.

The Home also runs:

(1) A Pre-Basic (Nursery) School where boys between 3 and 5 years of age are admitted. In 1966 it had 45 students. Four teachers looked after the boys.

(2) A Junior Basic School meant for boys of the age-group of 6 to 11. There were 833 students in this school in 1966. 30 teachers served in its five units. Spinning, Clay-modelling and Agriculture are the crafts taught in the school.

(3) A Senior Basic School which had on its roll 458 students in four units in 1966, gave along with general education, elementary training in one of the technical and vocational subjects such as Carpentry, Tailoring, Toy-making, Electricity and Gardening. The units were under 19 teachers.

(4) A Junior Basic Training College which imparted training to 96 trainees in 1966. The College had 19 members on its teaching staff.

(5) A Post-Graduate Basic Training College which is fully residential had 116 teacher-trainees in 1966, under the guidance of 27 members of the teaching staff. The College has provision for training in Weaving, Carpentry, Tailoring, Agriculture, Arts and Music.

(6) A Higher Secondary Multipurpose School which had on its roll 374 boys, had a staff of 41 members in 1966. Education is imparted to the boys in the four diversified courses viz., Science, Humanities, Technical and Commerce.

(7) A Vivekananda Centenary College which provides for Honours courses in Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, History, Economics and English, besides the pass course. In 1965 there were 353 students on the roll of the College with 37 teachers as members of the Staff. It has a hostel for 100 students attached to the Home.

(8) A Junior Technical School which admits boys who have completed the Class VIII of the Senior Basic School. The students are given training for three years. There are 8 sections viz., Fittings, Machineshop, Engineering Drawing and Elementary Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, etc.

Boys who pass in the first Division in the Final Examination of the school are eligible for Admission into the L.E.E. or L.M.E. course in Polytechnic schools. The total number of students in 1966 was 220 and the strength of the teaching staff was 34.

(9) A Vocational School provides instruction and practical training in Fittings, Turning and Welding. There were 72 students on the roll under the guidance of three teachers.

(10) The Home has a well-equipped District Library with 11,686 books and 1000 members. 5 daily News Papers and 29 periodicals are received in the Library. There is a Mobile section of the Library with 9,436 books and 102 Service units.

The Home has 10 Social Education Centres each conducting a night school for adults and an Audio-Visual unit.

A Rural Librarianship Training Centre for 25 trainees with a teaching staff of 7, was started in 1962. The duration of the training is six months.

(11) The Home has a hospital with 48 beds for rendering medical help to the resident students.

(12) It also brings out Souvenirs and monthly bulletins.

The Managing Committee of the Home expresses its thanks to the donors, subscribers, and sympathisers as also the Union and State Governments for the help and co-operation rendered.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION TUBERCULOSIS SANATORIUM, RANCHI

Report for 1965-66

The Ramakrishna Mission TB Sanatorium, Ranchi, was started in 1951 with only 32 beds. It has now grown into a well-equipped Sanatorium of 240 beds, having all facilities necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of Tuberculosis patients including major chest surgery. There is also a Rehabilitation Centre where ex-patients are given training in various departments of the Sanatorium, such as Laboratory, X-Ray, Nursing, Stores, Office, Power House, Water Works, Poultry Farm, Tailoring, etc.

During the year 1965-66, 541 patients were treated, of these 330 were discharged. 106 Surgical Operations were performed, including 3 Pneumonectomy, 3 Lobectomy, 89 Thoracoplasty, 6 Thoracoscopy. 81 poor TB patients were treated free of all charges and 24 at concession rates in the In-patients Department, with the help of the donations, subscriptions and the income derived from the endowments and estates at Calcutta and Patna. 10 of these TB patients belonged to Scheduled Castes & Tribes. 457 TB cases and 839 general cases were also given free medical advice and assistance in the Out-patients Department. 147 beds were maintained free by different organisations and agencies. 40 ex-patients were accommodated in the After-care Colony and Rehabilitation Centre. Most of them were employed in the Sanatorium after completing their training in various departments.

During the year 1965-66, the income was Rs. 6,67,311-54 and the expenditure Rs. 7,74,392.07 resulting in a deficit of Rs. 1,07,080.53. The yearly per capita expenditure which had been Rs. 2,512 in 1958 rose to Rs. 3,469.19 in 1965-66. We fervently appeal to the charitably disposed people of our country and the Government to help this institution, dedicated to the service of humanity.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAPITH DEOGHAR, BIHAR

Report for the period from April '64 to March '66

The Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar is a residential Higher Secondary School consisting of eight classes from IV to XI with English medium of instruction.

The School is affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education, New Delhi. There are 283 students belonging to different communities on the roll including 2 day-scholars. Science, Humanities and Commerce are the subjects taught at present; among crafts the Vidyapith now offers Tailoring and Commercial Art.

The Vidyapith has been selected as a centre for imparting education to All-India Merit Scholars. It has 49 such students on the roll hailing from the East and South-East parts of India.

The Library of the Vidyapith had 8,395 books at the end of the period under report. 38 periodicals and 6 dailies were received in the Reading Room.

It has a dairy with 140 heads of cattle and the produce is utilized for the boys of the Vidyapith.

The Vidyapith runs a Charitable Dispensary with Homeo and Allopathic sections. 15,000 cases, of which 4,069 were new, were treated in 1965-66.

During the period under report a new dormitory and teachers' quarters were constructed.

12 poor and meritorious students were financially helped during the period.

A free primary school was started in October 1965, for the children of the backward classes of the near about villages. The strength of the school in 1966 was 82.

The Vidyapith celebrated birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda. Saraswati Puja and Kali Puja and other festivals were also observed.

The Managing Committee of the Vidyapith thanks the donors, subscribers and well-wishers as also the Government of India and Government of Bihar for their help.

The needs of the Vidyapith are a Prayer hall, Library and Reading Room, Assembly hall, water pumps and fittings, for which it appeals for contributions from the generous public.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4

Birthday Celebration of Swami Vivekananda

The hundred and fifth birthday of Swami Vivekananda which fell on the 1st of February 1967 was celebrated at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras with Mangalarati in the Shrine at 5 a.m., followed by Bhajan, Vedic Chanting, *Chandi Puja*, reading of the *Kathopanisad* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. The special worship in the Shrine which started at 7 a.m., came to a close with Homa at 12.45 p.m. About 900 devotees were given prasad in hand.

In the evening after Arati in the Shrine a few pages from the *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master*, dealing with the first three meetings of Naren (Swami Vivekananda) with Sri Ramakrishna were read out. Swami Paramatmananda and Swami Kailasananda then gave brief talks on Swamiji's life and message.

The Public Celebration which came off on Sunday the 12th February 1967 was held at the VIVEKANANDA HALL of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. The programme began with Harikatha on Swami Vivekananda by "Kalikumar" of Thyagarayanagar at 3-30 p.m., and came to an end at 5.20 p.m.

The Public meeting which was presided over by His Excellency Sardar Ujjal Singh, Governor of Madras, started at 5-30 p.m. with Vedic Invocation, and devotional songs. Swami Kailasananda welcomed the Governor, Sardar Ujjal Singh, Sardarni Ujjal Singh, who had come on special invitation, the speakers of the evening, as also the audience and introduced the subject of the evening.

Sri K. V. Jagannathan, Editor, *Kalaimagal*, and Sri A. L. Krishnan, Principal, Jain College, Madras, spoke on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda in Tamil and English respectively. After the English speech Prizes to the winners in the Inter-Collegiate Essay Competition held by the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, Vivekananda College in this connection were distributed by the Governor. The Governor then addressed the gathering. (His speech appears elsewhere in this issue.)

Sri K. Balasubramanya Aiyar, M.L.C., proposed a vote of thanks and the meeting came to a close at 6-50 p.m.

There was Bhajan led by Swami Priyananda for nearly an hour and a half in the Math Hall after the meeting and the function ended at 9 p.m.

The birthday *Tithipuja* of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna falls on March 13, 1967.

VEDANTA KESARI

FORM IV

(See Rule 8)

Statement about ownership and other particulars about the *Vedanta Kesari* (according to Form IV, Rule 8, circulated by the Registrar of Newspapers for India).

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I, Swami Mitrananda, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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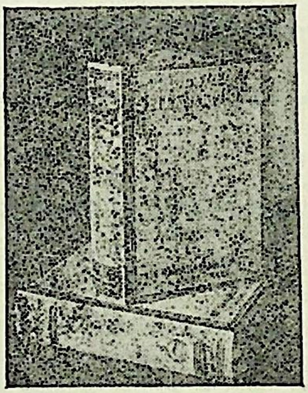

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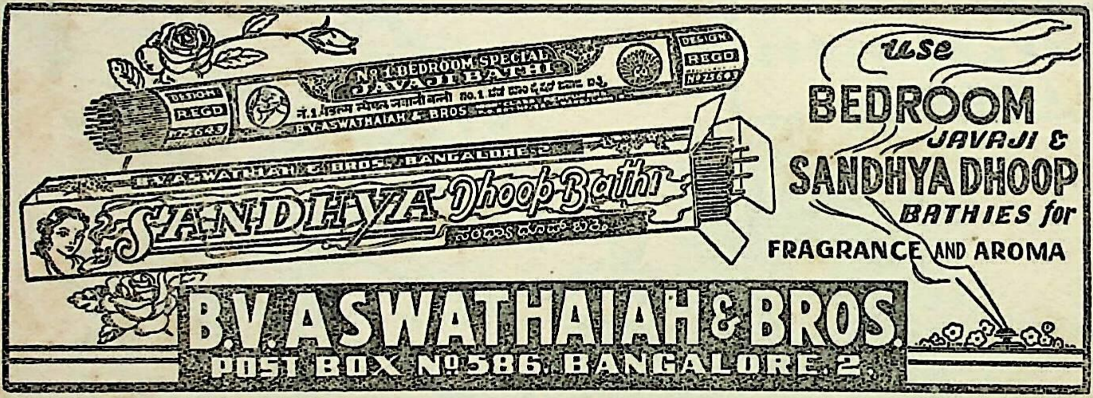
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